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Election '98

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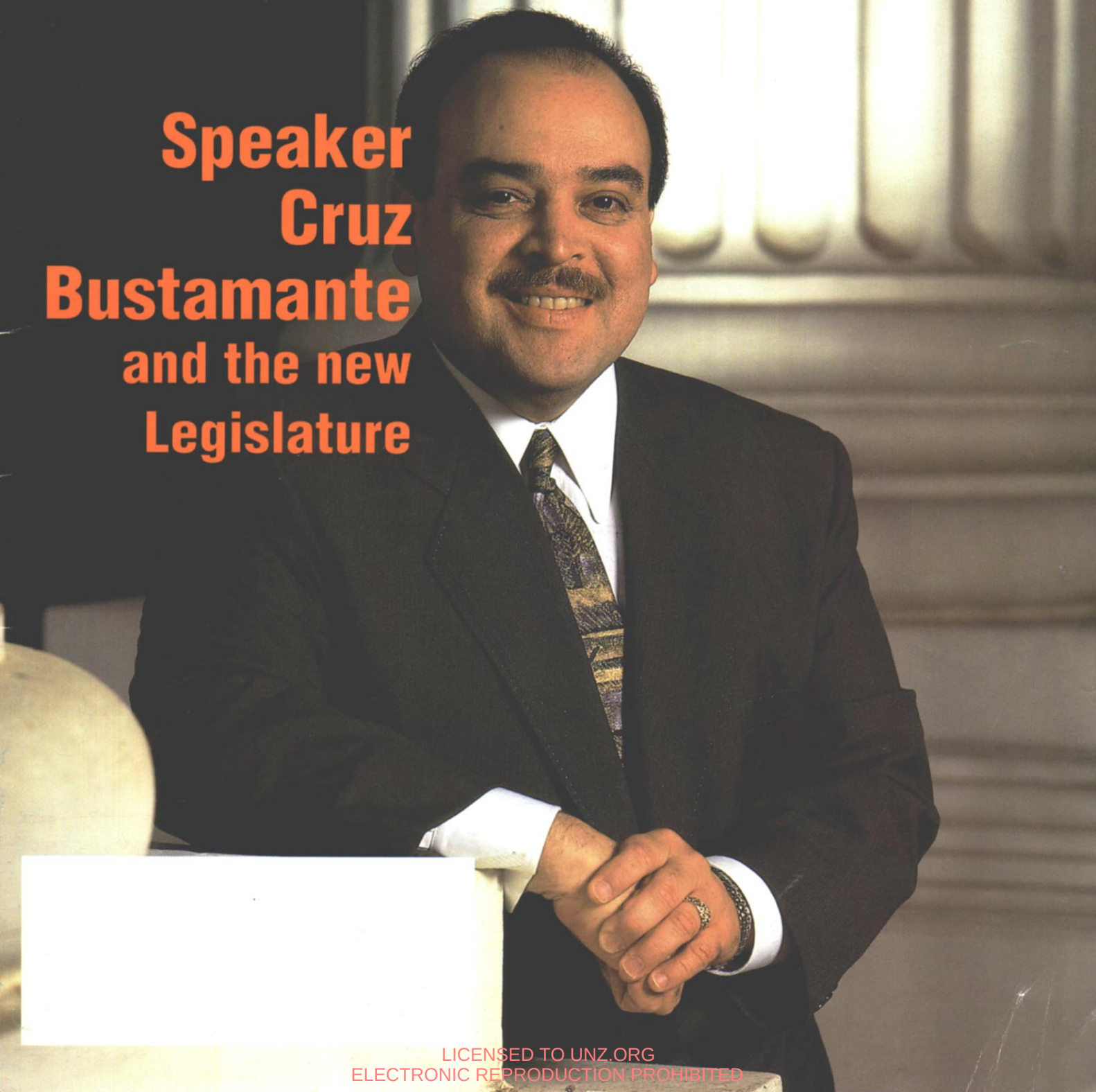
Independent analysis of politics and government

Speaker Cruz Bustamante and the new Legislature



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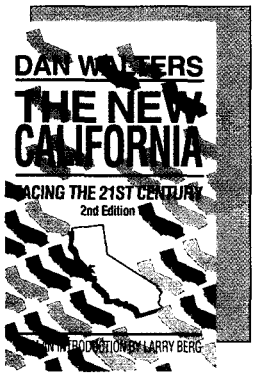
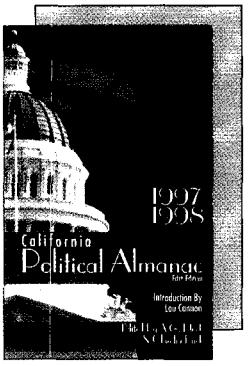


By Dan Walters with an introduction by Larry L. Berg. *The Sacramento Bee's* well-known political correspondent, Dan Walters, completed a 9,000-mile odyssey through California's 58 counties which served as the basis for this book. It describes the socioeconomic future of the nation's largest state and political implications of these trends. This 1992 edition is 186 pages long and contains numerous charts with detailed political and demographic data based on the 1990 Census. 51/2 X 8 1/2", $11.95.

California Political Almanac.



Every reader becomes a political insider with this candid analysis of California's political leaders written by Sacramento's most knowledgeable journalists. The *California Political Almanac* contains biographies, photographs, voting records and district description for every member of the state Senate, Assembly and Congress, as well as for every constitutional office. The *Almanac* also includes chapters on the bureaucracy, lobbyists, media, local government and much more: over 550 pages of data and analysis. 6x9", $34.95, paper. 1997-98 edition available in March.

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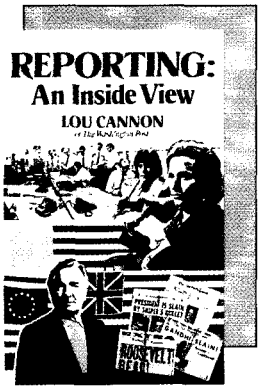

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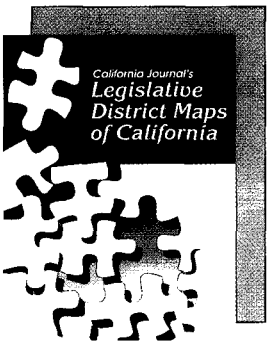

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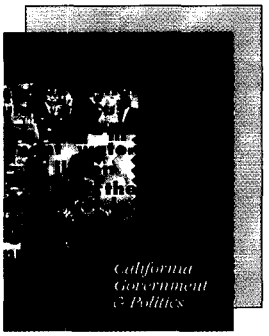

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California JOURNAL

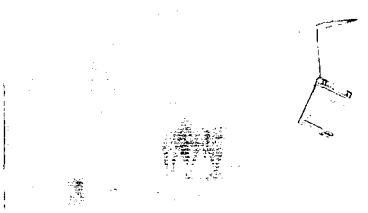
Independent analysis of politics and government

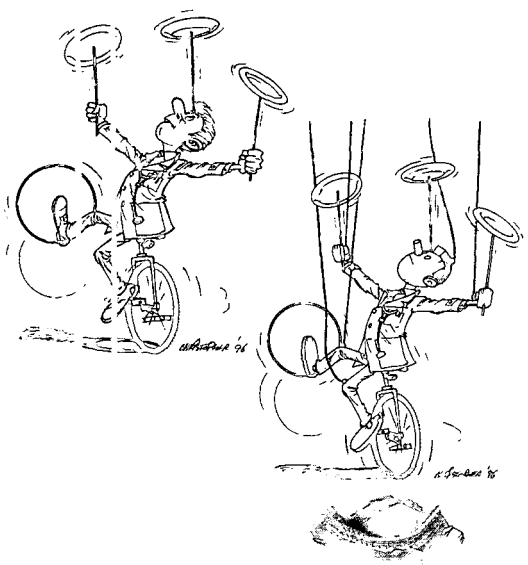
JANUARY 1997
VOLUME XXVIII, NUMBER 1

6 **The new Legislature**
With Democrats back in control of the Assembly, new Speaker Cruz Bustamante of Fresno, a moderate, has consolidated power in his hands. But the real power may be centered in the Senate.
By Steve Scott

11 **Nested districts**
The 1996 election created new competition for future elections. This chart shows which assemblymembers are nested in which Senate districts, and when term limits applies to all legislators.

12 **Election '98**
Yes, we know you've barely taken a breath after Election '96, but the race for governor in 1998 already is underway — and Proposition 208 and the pending open primary create a whole new set of confusing rules.
By John Borland





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32 **PIOs**
Government public-information officers serve two masters — their bosses and the public — and this puts them on a tightrope, especially in the Wilson administration.
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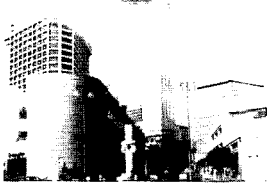
40 **Stadium politics**
Alameda County taxpayers may be on the hook for renovations at the Oakland Coliseum — a bill that was supposed to be paid without dipping into the public treasury. But that experience hasn't deterred other cities and counties from wanting to build expensive stadiums.
By Noel Brinkerhoff



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Photography by Rich Pedroncelli

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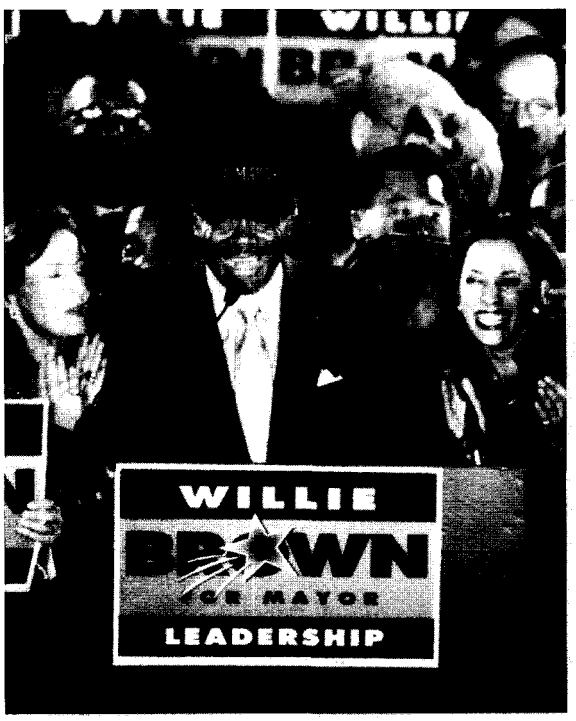
Upfront
umbrage

Sandbag of the month: The San Francisco press corps' treatment of Hizzoner, Willie Brown Jr., after Brown delivered a tongue-in-cheek response to a bogus question. The episode occurred during a telephone press conference between San Francisco and Paris, where the mayor was attending a sister-city ceremony. Brown was asked about getting the French to help finance San Francisco's proposed sports stadium. Forget the stadium, Brown said; he wanted France to buy the '49ers a new quarterback — a slam at the team's back-up signal-caller, Elvis Grbac, who had thrown a pair of critical interceptions the previous Sunday during a loss to the hated Dallas Cowboys. Warming to his subject, Brown unleashed the kind of hyperbole familiar to Sacramento reporters but apparently unknown in the Bay Area: He called Grbac "an embarrassment to humankind" and said the fourth-year pro "can't play in any stadium that I'm going to assist to be built." As a legislator and Assembly speaker, Brown often fired darts from the hip in response to joke questions — even in response to serious questions — getting off some outrageous quip before settling into a serious answer. Brown's jest at Grbac, however, couldn't have come at a worse time. Seems Grbac's nine-month old son had just undergone surgery, and both he and his wife clearly were upset. Brown apologized for his remarks, but the *mea culpa* didn't stem the tide of negative publicity or calls to local sports talk shows expressing indignation with the mayor's cavalier denouncement of Grbac. Just shows the problem Brown has dealing with a media that he doesn't know — and that doesn't know him. Had that press conference happened in Sacramento, in front of the Capitol press corps, the jab at Grbac likely would not have seen the light of day. In San Francisco, it was treated as though the mayor had just suggested tearing down Coit Tower.



Gorton, the movie. Political consultant George Gorton had an interesting year. First, he got himself fired from the effort to elect Pete Wilson president — a gig that was followed by a successful jaunt to Moscow, where he helped get Boris Yeltsin re-elected president of Russia. Now, somebody wants to make a movie about the second venture. According to the *Orange County Register*, producer Andrew Licht ("Cable Guy," "Waterworld") is pushing the project, with Gorton's help. Working title: "American Consultants in Moscow." Among those considered to play Gorton is actor Tom Selleck. Somehow, we don't see political consultants as the new American hero types. Political ninja? Nah.

Legal briefs. The field for attorney general in 1998 is becoming crowded. Among Democrats interested in the post are Senate President pro Tempore Bill Lockyer of Hayward, Senate Majority Leader Charles Calderon of Whittier and former Congresswoman Lynn Schenk of San Diego. The 1994 nominee — former Assemblyman Tom Umberg of Garden Grove — also has taken out intention papers. Among Republicans with at least a filing listed with the Secretary of State's Office are David Stirling, currently Attorney General Dan Lungren's top deputy, and Orange County District Attorney Michael Capizzi.

Fire! Yelling "fraud" after an election and without hard evidence to back your claim — as defeated Representative Bob Dornan (R-Garden Grove) did in November — is the political equivalent of yelling "fire" in a crowded theater. It does nothing more than cause panic.

In her shoes. With welfare reform dumping responsibility for welfare policy into the laps of state legislators, a unique grant from the Northwest Institute for Children and Families at the University of Washington will allow state lawmakers to experience what it is like to bounce around on the social safety net. Some legislators from seven states — California not being one of them — have agreed to live on a food-stamp budget for a month. That's about $75. The program was founded by Natasha Grossman, who thought up the idea while lobbying against efforts to reform the welfare system. Her goal: make those who must determine welfare policy understand what it is like to live on welfare.

Musical districts. The ranks of Republicans interested in running for lieutenant governor was boosted recently with the addition of Senator Richard Mountjoy (R-Monrovia). He joins colleague Senator Tim Leslie (R-

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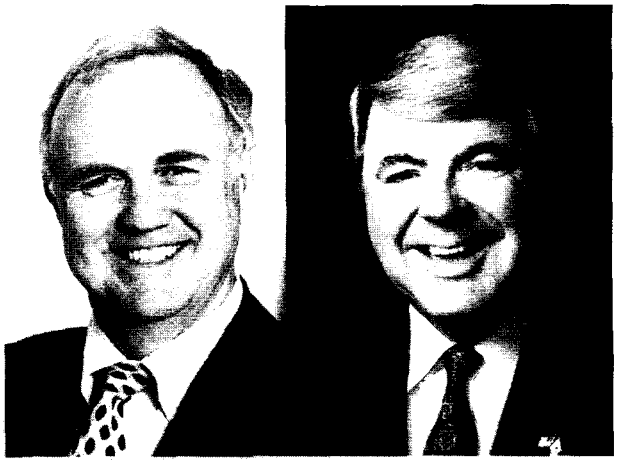
Carnelian Bay), who announced his intention to seek the number-zero post some time ago. No word yet on whether the 1994 candidate — Senator Cathie Wright (R-Simi Valley) — plans another tilt at the windmill. Meanwhile, Assemblyman Bernie Richter (R-Chico) said he will run for Leslie's Senate seat in 1998 (if Leslie becomes lieutenant guv) or 2000, when Leslie is termed out of office.



Bill Campbell (R-Orange), left; Bill Campbell, CMA, right

Identity crisis. The Orange County Transportation Authority tried to communicate with one of its newest legislators — Assemblyman Bill Campbell (R-Orange). They sent a draft of its 1997 state and federal legislative program to Campbell at the State Capitol. And it came right back. Stamped in bold blue letters across the envelope was this note: "Term expired. Return to sender." Now, Campbell was just elected last month to his first term in the Legislature, so either we've carried this term-limits thing to its most logical and absurd level, or some Assembly staffer thought the letter was addressed to the *other* Bill Campbell — the one who once represented parts of Orange and Los Angeles counties in both the Assembly and Senate and who now serves as president of the California Manufacturers' Association. The CMA's Campbell left the Assembly 20 years ago.

Dark Horse. No, it's not Leon Panetta's new nickname. It's the title of a new novel about to be published by screenwriter and novelist Doug Richardson. "Dark Horse" is a political novel "so gripping and promising," chirps Richardson's publicist, that the film rights already have been sold for $1.5 million. No, the novel isn't set in California but in Texas. But yes, Doug Richardson has deep political roots in California. His father is H.L. Richardson. Richardson the Younger wrote the screenplay for "Die Hard II," "Money Train" and "Bad Boys." No, none of the movies were about Richardson the Elder.

Shutout. *Governing* Magazine published its annual list of "public officials of the year" in its December 1996 issue, out last week. And there were no — count 'em, zero — Californians on the list. Last year, the only Californian named was Los Angeles' chief administrative officer, Sally Reed. It's been a while since an elected official from the Golden State received one of the magazine's awards for excellence.

He said ... wha? Secretary of State Bill Jones held a press conference last month, ostensibly to talk about his legislative agenda on campaign reform, electronic filing and so on. But he prefaced all of that with a little tidbit about reapportionment. Seems Jones wants to put into law that redistricting will be done by a group of masters appointed by the State Supreme Court — the same kind of group that drew the current districts after the Legislature and Governor Pete Wilson couldn't agree on a plan back in 1991. He'll introduce legislation to that effect this year but warned that he's ready to go the initiative route if lawmakers balk. You'd think that a potential earthquake such as that introduced by Jones would generate some media coverage. Nope. The only story appeared in our sister publication — *State Net Capitol Report - California.* To our knowledge, the only other journalist to write about it at all was columnist George Skelton of the *Los Angeles Times.*

"An important maxim to remember is "don't be an amateur." The job of being a professional politician, in spite of the odium which some persons have falsely attached to it, is a high and difficult one."

— Henry Cabot Lodge

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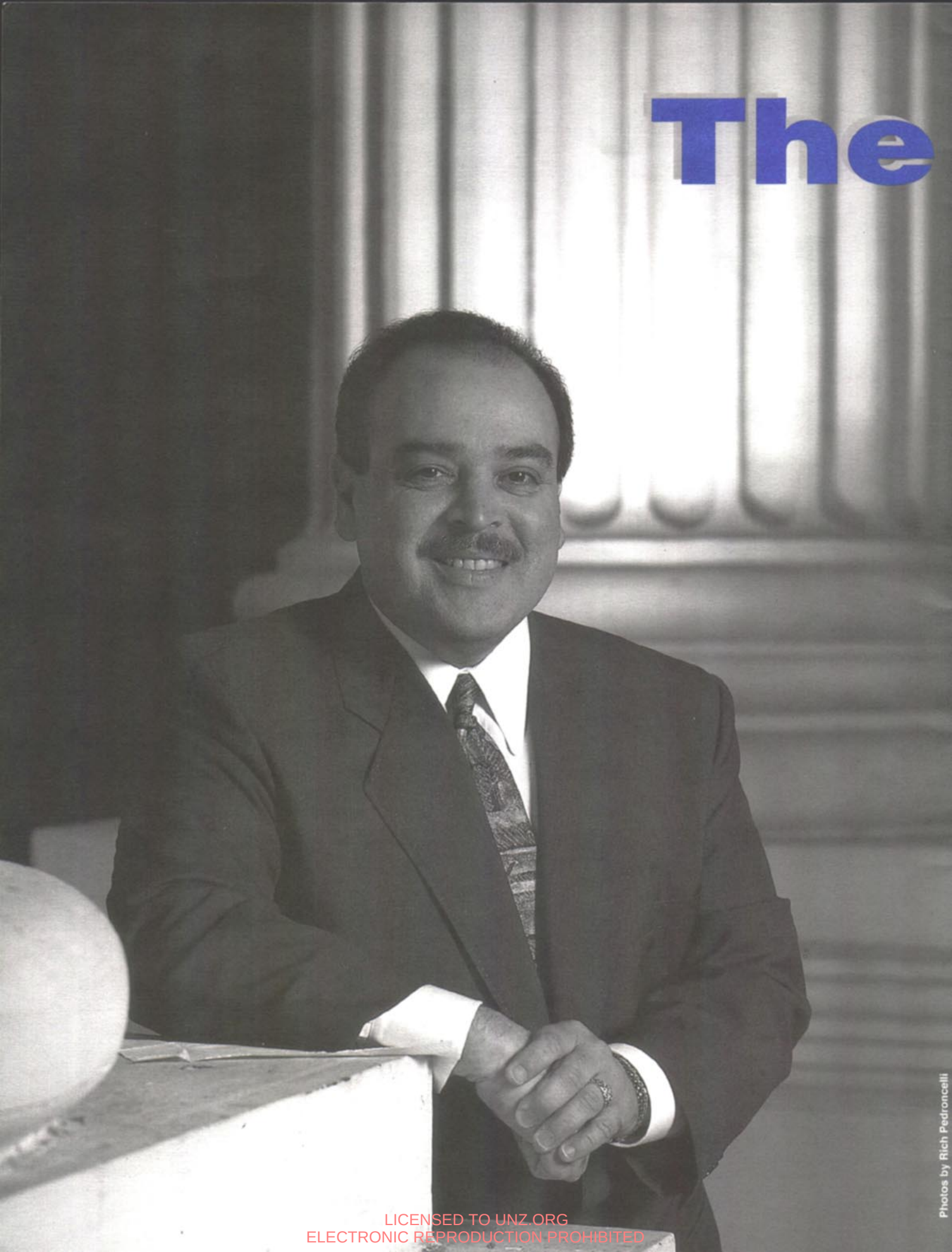

Photos by Rich Pedroncelli

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New Legislature

The Assembly's first Latino speaker confronts a caucus full of rookies, a lame-duck governor, and an ascendant state Senate, all with one eye on the term-limit clock.

By Steve Scott

On the wall of the corridor which leads from the member's lounge to the side entrance of the Assembly chambers hangs a row of photographs which, depending on your perspective, constitutes either a Hall of Fame or a Rogues Gallery. The pictures are of every person who has ever served as speaker of the California Assembly. Under each photo is a small bit of engraving with the name of the individual and their term as speaker. For the first 145 years of the Assembly's existence, it was enough to indicate the speakers' terms in years: 1961-1969, 1976-1980, 1980-1995. But when you get to 1995, the methodology changes.

From then on, the dates are listed in their entirety — month, day, and year.

The new engravings provide graphic evidence of the dizzying instability that characterized the past two years. Between January of 1995 and December of 1996, five different individuals held the title of Assembly speaker. Three of those five held the title in 1995 alone. Among those five are the first woman speaker, the first freshman speaker, the first GOP speaker in a quarter century and the first speaker in 15 years whose name wasn't Willie Brown.

The individual whose photo will soon be added to the "Wall" of Speakers — Fresno Democrat Cruz Bustamante — also brings some historic significance. The milestone posterity is likely to append to his name is that of "first Latino Assembly speaker." Few deny that his ascension to the leadership post makes him one of the highest-ranking Latino elected officials in the nation. But Bustamante's enduring legacy may be in another milestone he carries — the first speaker whose entire membership was elected under term limits.

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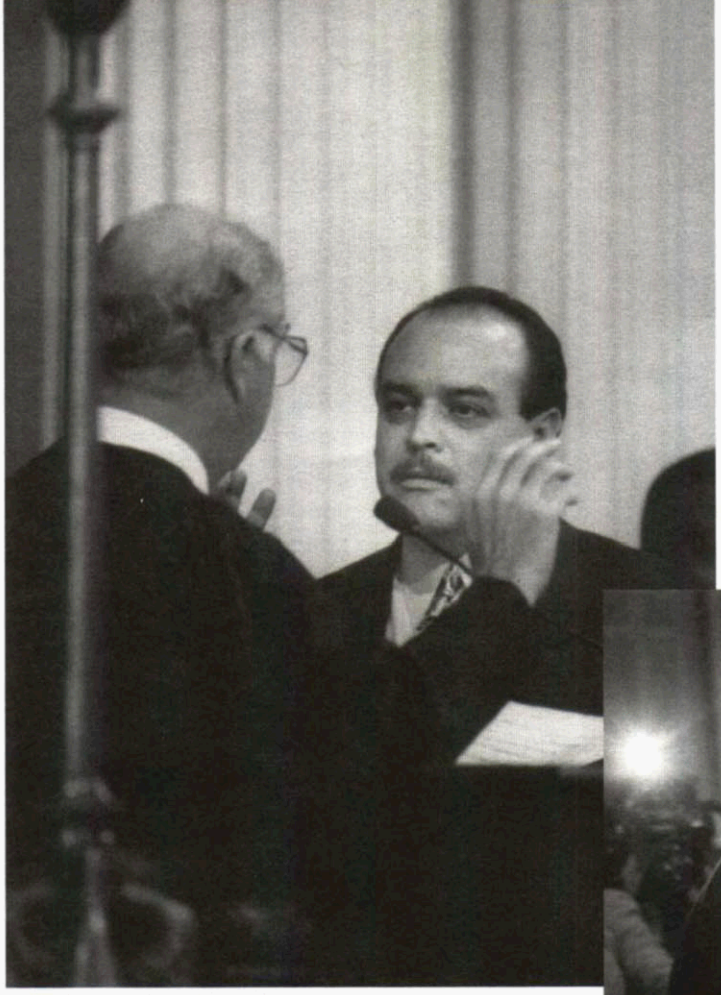

Bustamante takes the oath

tion 140, the architect of the takeover — former Minority Leader Richard Katz — was denied the ability to enjoy the fruits of his success. But while term limits may have created Bustamante's opportunity, his rise to the key Democratic leadership post was not merely a product of timing. Bustamante worked his prospective colleagues, winning key early support from the likes of incoming liberal freshmen Kevin Shelley (D-San Francisco) and Don Perata (D-Oakland). Bustamante was also active in several primaries, in many cases helping Latino candidates against non-Latino opponents. "We [the Latino Caucus] did over 2.3 million pieces of mail," noted Senator Richard Polanco (D-Los Angeles), chairman of the Legislature's Latino Caucus. "It was a cultivation that occurred," said Polanco. "It wasn't an accident."

Despite his more moderate politics, Bustamante quickly embraced the liberal, non-Latino wing of his caucus. His

Curt Pringle (L) and Bustamante

"He will define what a speaker is in an abbreviated period of leadership pre-determined by term limits," said Brown, who held the post for 15 years before leaving the Assembly last year to run for mayor of San Francisco. "He is the pioneer in that role."

Bustamante's election as speaker came less than a month after his party recaptured the Assembly majority it lost in the 1994 GOP tide. Many of the races which led to the Democrats' 43-37 majority were won by fewer than 1000 votes, and in districts where Republicans figure to be competitive again in 1998 (see *CJ*, December 1996). The Democrats' victory ended the abbreviated speakership of Garden Grove Republican Curt Pringle, who took the reins in January (see *CJ*, April 1996).

Thanks to the 1990 term limit law, Proposi-

Democrat Antonio Vilarigosa of Los Angeles nominates Bustamante

leadership team is stocked with liberals, among them Santa Monica Democrat Sheila Kuehl, who campaigned for speaker before giving way to Bustamante. The new speaker also won enactment of new rules which re-integrated into the speaker's office the power that the GOP had parceled out to the Rules Committee. "This speaker has more power than Willie Brown ever had," said Assemblyman Bill Leonard (R-Redlands), one of five former members who have returned to Sacramento this year. Despite their suspicions, though, the GOP seems content to keep its partisan powder dry for the moment.

"We're willing to make sure we move forward and are not obstructionist ... but are people who are trying to work with [the process] and move it forward," said Pringle.

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Speaker Pro Tem Shelia Kuehl (L) and colleague Caole Migden

Over in the Senate, President Pro Tempore Bill Lockyer (D-Hayward) kept his majority intact, as well as most of his leadership team. During the 1995-96 session, Lockyer asserted his influence and that of his house, effortlessly turning aside a barrage of conservative legislation which flowed his way from the Republican Assembly. While Lockyer's dominance as a leader may have been enhanced by his unique position as head of the only arm of state government controlled by Democrats, there are many who believe the Senate will continue to be the place where most of the hard work of policy-making will take place. "The balance of power is still going to be tilted toward the Senate," said Tim Hodson, director of the Center for California Studies at California State University, Sacramento, and a former legislative staffer. "You still have a number of members of the Senate whose experience predates term limits. "That is simply going to give the Senate an advantage in many ways."

Irrespective of which house is dominant in the Legislature the road to success in any session invariably runs through the governor's office. Governor Pete Wilson finds himself in the same position as his immediate predecessor, facing a hostile Legislature in his last two years in office. While George Deukmejian's retirement was voluntary and Wilson's is imposed by term limits, the challenge is the same —getting lawmakers to view him as more than just yesterday's news. "There's going to be a natural incentive on the part of Democrats to not let the Republicans look too good," said Bruce Cain of the Institute for Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. "It's hard for a lame duck in any situation to be incredibly effective."

This barrier could make it that much harder for Wilson to polish up his legacy for posterity or another presidential run in 2000. But Wilson is far from helpless in directing his fate. "The governor has never been shy about wielding his veto pen," said former Assembly Republican Leader, now Senator Jim Brulte (R-Rancho Cucamonga). "I suspect now he'll have more veto fodder." Wilson also benefits from the same dynamic which worked in Lockyer's favor last year — he's the only person of his party heading up a corner of the legislative triangle.

"It's easy to dismiss the governor's role, but it would be a mistake," notes Hodson. "Not only does he have the ultimate veto decision, but the overriding characteristic of politics in California has been the budget, and the governor is intimately involved in every step of the budget process."

In 1997, that budget process will provide an early indication of how Wilson will approach the Democratic Legislature. A major feature of the budget this year will be the implementation of the new federal welfare reform law. Reducing welfare benefits has been a unifying theme of past Wilson budgets, and the ink was barely dry from the president's signature on the bill before the governor ordered benefits to illegal immigrants cut off. That order has since been stayed by a federal court. A hastily drafted implementation plan, followed by equally rushed public hearings, have left Lockyer accusing Wilson of trying to impose a solution. "When you construct a very complicated proposal in secret, it almost dooms the effort to failure," said Lockyer. Lockyer's criticism is almost certain to get under Wilson's skin, and some believe it is simply a prelude to coming attractions.

"I can't see how Sacramento is going to handle welfare reform without tremendous acrimony," said Cain. "Wilson has staked his career on these issues."

Welfare reform is hardly the only policy conundrum facing lawmakers this year. The Legislature will also be called

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upon to enact gambling regulation, reform the juvenile justice system, fund K-12 and higher education, explore ways to relieve pressure on the corrections system ... the list goes on and on. But every bit as daunting as these challenges will be coming to grips with the changing nature of the institution they inhabit.

It is possible that the 1990 term-limit law could be struck down by an Oakland federal court which is considering its constitutionality. The court held a hearing on the law in October and Judge Claudia Wilkin was outspoken in her discomfort with the law's lifetime ban. But term limits are only one of the factors which will affect the Legislature of the future. This year's campaign finance reform initiative, Proposition 208, will, if upheld, change the leader's traditional political function as chief fund-raiser for the party caucus. The new law bans fund transfers between candidates and restricts the size of contributions that can be made. There is also the overall uncertainty created by the 1991 redistricting, which increased the number of districts subject to election competition and will likely keep margins narrow in both houses, at least until the next census.

Then there is that large rookie class. Even if term limits are thrown out, about three-fourths of the 80-member Assembly will enter 1997 with two or fewer years of experience. The Senate, meanwhile, is full of leadership prospects with their own eyes on the prize. If Proposition 140 is ultimately upheld, Lockyer will almost certainly face pressure to step aside early, especially if he follows through on hints of a run for attorney general. "When people smell desertion, they tend to make you desert faster than you want to," noted Cain. Pringle and Bustamante — themselves termed out of the Legislature in 1998 — will also face similar pressure from within their caucus, especially from their large, impatient rookie class.

Bustamante and Richard Katz

Bustamante says he'd like to respond to the changes by better insulating the Legislature's staff from partisan changeover. "I do believe there are non-combatants," said Bustamante. "There needs to be more professionalization." Whether or not Bustamante follows through on his plans, it seems likely the Assembly — indeed the Legislature as a whole — will never run quite the same way it did before 1990. And that can only mean one thing.

The Assembly's Gallery of Speakers is going to get a lot more crowded.

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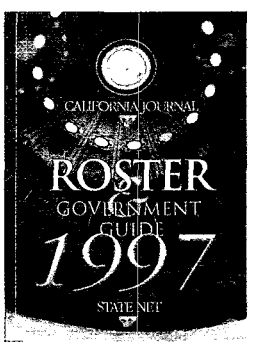

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The Nested Legislature

The following chart shows Assembly districts nested inside Senate districts — and where future competition may develop.

NESTED DISTRICTS

SD	Senator	Limit	AD	Member	Limit
1	Leslie - R	2000	3	Richter - R	1998
			4	Oller - R	2002
2	Thompson - D	1998	1	Strom-Martin D	2002
			7	V.Brown - D	1998
3	Burton - D	2004	6	Mazzoni - D	2000
			13	Migden - D	2002
4	Johannessen - R	2002	2	Woods - R	2000
			8	Thomson - D	2002
5	Johnston - D	2000	10	Bowler - R	1998
			17	Machado - D	2000
6	Greene - D	1998	5	Alby - R	1998
			9	Ortiz - D	2002
7	Rainey - R	2004	11	Torlakson - D	2002
			15	Leach - R	2002
8	Kopp - I	1998	12	Shelley - D	2002
			19	Papan - D	2002
9	Lee - D	2004	14	Aroner - D	2002
			16	Perata - D	2002
10	Lockyer - D	1998	18	Sweeney - D	2000
			20	Figueroa - D	2000
11	Sher - D	2004	21	Lempert - D	2000
			24	Cunneen - R	2000
12	Morretti - R	2002	25	House - R	2000
			26	Cardoza - D	2002
13	Vasconcellos - D	2004	22	Alquist - D	2002
			23	Honda - D	2002
14	Maddy - R	1998	29	Poochigian - R	2000
			32	Ashburn - R	2002
15	McPherson - R	2004	27	Keeley - D	2002
			28	Frusetta - R	2000
16	Costa - D	2002	30	Prenter - R	2002
			31	Bustamante - D	1998
17	Knight - R	2004	34	Olberg - R	2000
			36	Runner - R	2002
18	O'Connell - D	2002	33	Bordonaro - R	2000
			35	Firestone - R	2000
19	Wright - R	2000	37	Takasugi - R	1998
			38	McClintock - R	2000
20	Rosenthal - D	1998	39	Cardenas - D	2002
			40	Hertzberg - D	2002
21	Schiff - D	2004	43	Wildman - D	2002
			44	Scott - D	2002
22	Polanco - D	2002	45	Villaraigosa - D	2000
			46	Caldera - D	1998
23	Hayden - D	2000	41	Kuehl - D	2000
			42	Knox - D	2000
24	Solis - D	2002	49	Martinez - D	1998
			57	Gallegos - D	2000
25	Hughes - D	2000	51	Vincent - D	2002
			52	Washington - D	2002
26	Watson - D	1998	47	K.Murray - D	2000
			48	Wright - D	2002
27	Karnette - D	2004	54	Kuykendall - R	2000
			56	Havice - D	2002
28	Dills - D	1998	53	Bowen - D	1998
			55	Floyd - D	2000
29	Mountjoy - R	2000	59	Margett - R	2000
			60	Miller - R	2000
30	Calderon - D	1998	50	Escutia - D	1998
			58	Napolitano - D	1998
31	Brulte - R	2004	63	Leonard - R	2002
			65	Granlund - R	2000
32	Ayala - D	1998	61	Aguiar - R	1998
			62	Baca - D	1998
33	Lewis - R	2000	71	Campbell - R	2002
			72	Ackerman - R	2000
34	Hurtt - R	2002	68	Pringle - R	1998
			69	Morrissey - R	2000
35	Johnson - R	2004	67	Baugh - R	2000
			70	Brewer - R	2000
36	Haynes - R	2002	64	Pacheco - R	2002
			66	Thompson - R	2000
37	Kelley - R	2000	75	Goldsmith - R	1998
			80	Battin - R	2000
38	Craven - R	1998	73	Morrow - R	1998
			74	Kaloogian - R	2000
39	Alpert - D	2004	76	Davis - D	2000
			78	Wayne - D	2002
40	Peace - D	2002	77	Baldwin - R	2000
			79	Ducheny - D	2000

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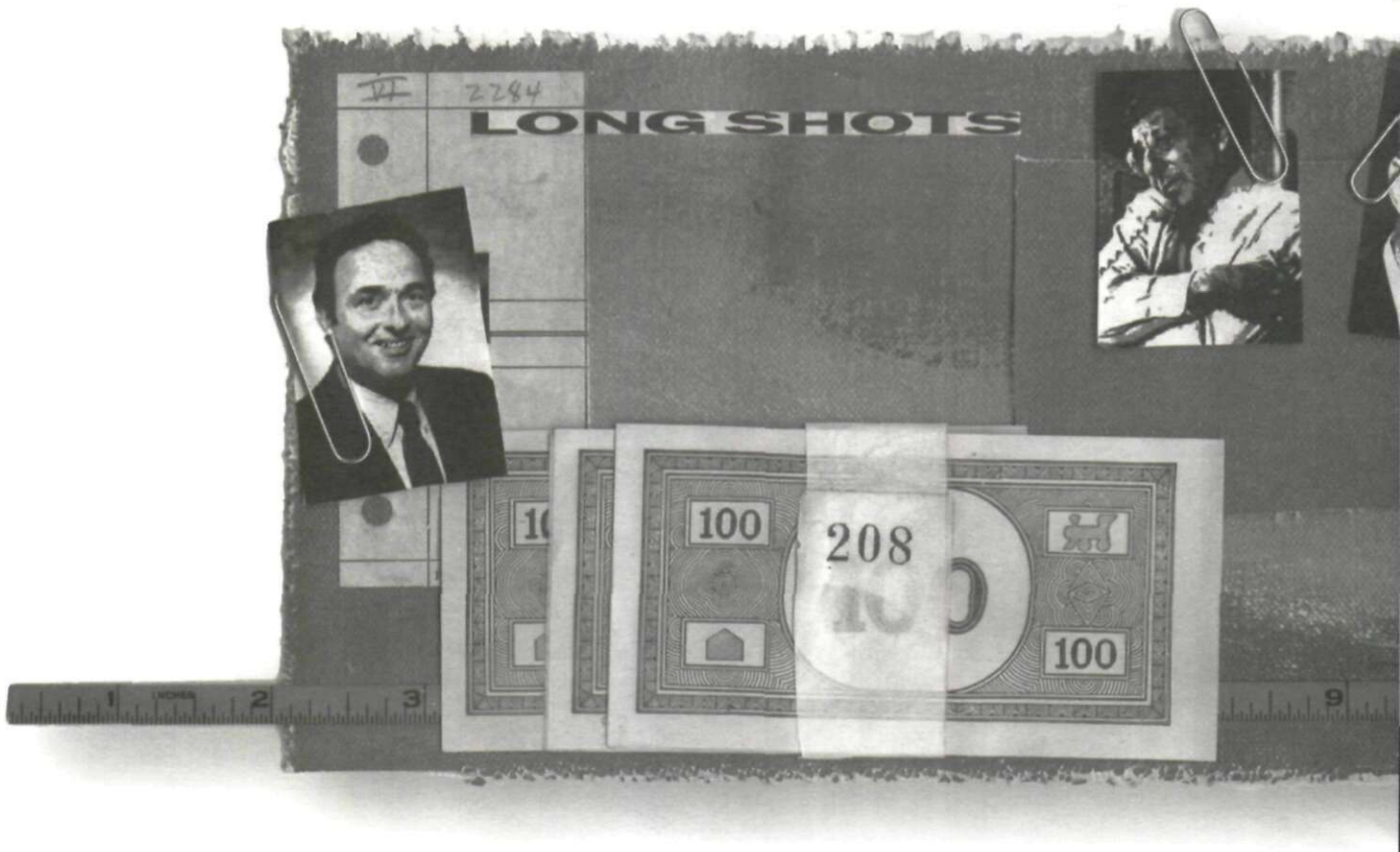
Blind man's



A pair of new state elections laws — and pending lawsuits against both — have turned the first round of the 1998 campaign into a high-stakes guessing game.

By John Borland

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bluff

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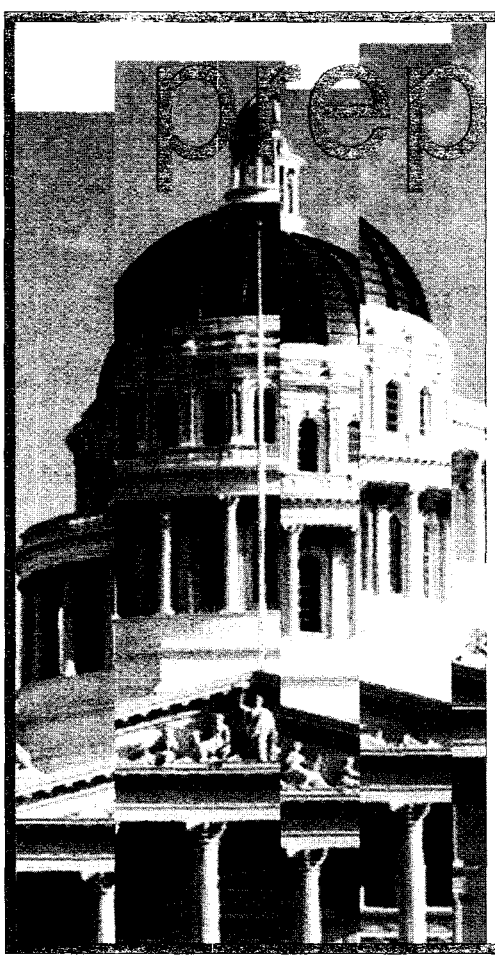
Davis

Lungren

Of course not. While there is no shortage of candidates for governor — or for any other statewide office in 1998 — the rules of the game these hopefuls wish to play are in a frustrating state of flux. The passage of March's open primary initiative and Proposition 208's strict campaign-finance reform have dramatically changed the most basic campaign calculations — how to raise money, who to raise money from, which portion of the electorate to woo in order to get the most votes. And both of these measures are in court, allowing even the best elections lawyers only a guess at what the shape of the legal landscape will be in 1998. "Anybody going into the governor's race saying, 'I have a pretty good feel for how the law is going to be in the fall of '98 is not very astute," says Chip Nielsen, a leading political-law attorney.

The most imposing figure waiting in the Democratic wings is U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, who ran for the state's top office in 1990 and barely lost to Pete Wilson. Feinstein wants the job but is not thrilled about the idea of a fourth bruising statewide race in eight years. She has said that she will not make a decision until later this year. Rivaling her in the buzz category is President Bill Clinton's departing chief of staff, Leon Panetta, who has resigned from his White House position to come back to California. Panetta has been giving interviews that sound pointedly like campaign themes and appears to be lining up potential support, but also says he is waiting to decide. Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis is the only Democrat who has unambiguously entered the race and has been actively fund raising for more than a year. State Controller



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Kathleen Connell has given some signs that she may be considering a run. Alfred Checchi, the co-chairman of Northwest Airlines, said to be worth close to $550 million, also has indicated he may be interested in the race.

On the Republican side waits the boy-next-door profile of current Attorney General Dan Lungren. No credible figure has yet emerged to challenge his heir-apparent status, though an independently wealthy businessperson — a Michael Huffington or a Ron Unz — still has plenty of time to sidle in from outside the ranks of the state party establishment.

What faces these aspirants is a devilishly complicated game of what-if, since the new laws do not affect them equally. Those with substantial personal money come out ahead. Lungren and Davis, who will have millions in their campaign accounts when 1996 chimes to a close and 208's six-month fund-raising ban kicks in, start with a huge advantage. Those who have a database full of small donors also start ahead. For now. The campaign is in the bluffing stage, as the would-be candidates tout themselves as best able to maneuver across these shifting legal sands to victory, while doing a more realistic assessment of the landscape in private.

Proposition 198, passed last March, established what is known in political science circles as a "blanket" primary. This means that primary voters, whatever their registration, will be able to choose any candidate, from any party, for each individual office. Only three other states — Alaska, Washington and Louisiana — have this kind of wide-open primary voting system.

Proposition 208 is more complicated. At its heart are limits on the sums that individuals, corporations and political-action committees can donate to candidates. Statewide candidates can receive only $500 in both primary and general election seasons, for a total of $1000 per contributor. The measure also contains voluntary spending limits, set for the gubernatorial race at $6 million in the primary and $8 million in the general. If a candidate accepts these limits, contribution limits double for his or her donors. Other provisions regulate party and independent expenditures, transfers between candidates, and other forms of political fund raising (see *CJ*, September 1996).

Democrats filed suit against the open primary in November; Republicans will follow in late December or early 1997, and the two cases likely will be consolidated. Neither party is arguing that the "blanket" primary is inherently unconstitutional — only that they, as parties, have the constitutional right to nominate their own candidates without interference from the citizenry at large. A similar primary system has been upheld by the Alaska Supreme Court, but plaintiffs in that case are pursuing an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. Party attorneys, and many legal professors, note that the high court recently has tended to upholding broad party rights. "I think that the chances of the parties winning [the California] case are pretty good," says UCLA law professor Daniel Lowenstein.

The arguments against 208 are, due to the law's reach, more varied. One pro-life group already has filed against the measure; a larger collection of political parties, candidates, PACs, and donors will file in late December or early 1997. "I think there are some parts

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Feinstein

Connell

Panetta

that are very clearly not constitutional," says Democratic attorney Joe Remcho, whose firm will handle pieces of the challenge. He cites the ban on transfers, the ban on off-year fund raising and the limits on party spending as particularly weak points.

But many legal experts say the core of the law — the contribution limits and the voluntary spending limits — are endangered. Attorneys cite a recent Missouri circuit court decision that struck down a contribution limit schedule of $200 for legislative candidates and $300 for statewide candidates; they also note that the $1000 limits for federal races have been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court. Some legal experts say the court is unlikely to split the difference between these two figures, as 208's limits do. "What they might say is that [$1000] was really pushing the limit," particularly given the naturally high cost of running for any office in expensive California media markets, Lowenstein says. This could result in the contribution limits being overturned — although 208 proponents note that their statewide limits total $1000 over the course of an entire campaign season, matching the federal individual limits.

The voluntary spending limits also will be attacked by candidates and party lawyers who assert they are anything but voluntary. "It's a choice between the hemlock and the Odwalla," Democratic attorney Joe Remcho quips. Any statewide candidate who rejects the spending limits almost automatically triggers huge fund-raising advantages for his or her opponent. The choice: No choice at all, unless a candidate starts with Huffington-like wealth. If opponents can convince the courts that the scheme is substantially coercive, the spending caps are likely to be thrown out, Remcho says.

Supporters of 208 admit that most of the provisions will be challenged, but say the political parties are fighting a losing battle. "Every major provision of 208 has been upheld in court," notes former California Common Cause Executive Director Ruth Holton. The measure was written very carefully to sustain such legal attacks, she adds. "[Proposition] 208 wasn't written to push constitutional limits."

Few share Holton's assurance. The potential candidates must therefore plan for contingencies, overnight shifts that change the shape of the race.

But Feinstein, at least, knows this world. In 1990 the former San Francisco mayor ran against then-U.S. Senator Pete Wilson for governor under the strictures of Proposition 73, which imposed a $1000 contribution ceiling. As a result, her campaign finished the expensive primary essentially penniless, and then was unable to match Wilson's fund-raising abilities. Towards mid-September, says Feinstein consultant Bill Carrick, "Dianne was broke. We didn't know how we were going to stay on TV." But in late September, the courts lifted the $1000 ceiling and Democratic money finally began to pour in. "When the limits came off, it enabled us to be competitive."

The 1990 experience served as a lesson, Carrick argues, that the current campaign reformers didn't take to heart. "Contribution limits help Republicans," he says. "I think they have a broader range of contributors who can give $500 or $1000. ... [Democrats] do well with small donors, but we also do well when we're able to organize."

Even Republicans concede that the contribution limits may cut in their favor. "Feinstein was on the mat," remembers former Wilson consultant George Gorton. "I think limiting contributions at $1000 does favor Republicans." But he quickly notes that Lungren will not necessarily inherit Wilson's enviable position. "Wil-

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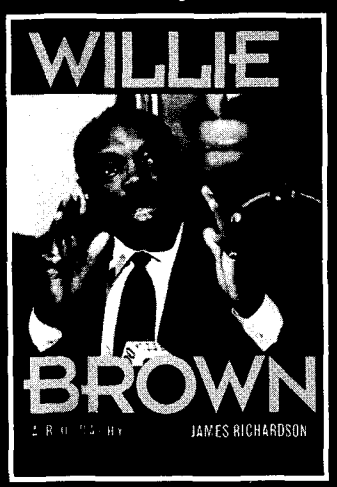
—George Skelton, Political Columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*



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son went in with a huge fundraising base," left over from his U.S. Senate races, Gorton said. "Wilson had 20,000 people give him $1000." Lungren, despite his long electoral experience, lacks this gold-plated list of supporters.

Feinstein's 1990 experience, and her Senate races under federal contribution limits, put her in perhaps the best position of any of the potential candidates, despite Davis' and Lungren's multimillion dollar head start. "She's run statewide before, and she has a very active list of donors" at the $1000-and-under level, Carrick says. "She also is fortunate to have resources she can put in herself." Such self-financing is not covered under Proposition 208's contribution limits but still would count toward her voluntary spending limit.

The only other potential candidate with such advantages is Checchi, who would have no need for voluntary spending limits or small contributions if he enters the race ready to spend even a small fraction of his $550 million fortune. "That gets you a lot of TV commercials," laments Democratic consultant David Townsend. "The reformers [have created] a system that rewards individual wealth." No other potential candidate, with the possible exception of Connell, has significant personal money that could be used in the campaign.

Panetta probably is the aspirant most hurt by the new rules. Though he returns to California with star-quality buzz and incomparable Washington connections, he will be starting from near zero in his fund-raising efforts. He has neither Feinstein's broad base of small donors nor experience running a statewide campaign. This gives him a heavy head wind to fight — if the 208 provisions stay in effect. But the second the limits come off, which could happen soon or never, the relative value of Feinstein's broad-based donor list falls and Panetta's connections turn to gold.

Davis' campaign will have raised close to $3.8 million by the end of December, nearly two-thirds what he would be able to spend in the primary under 208's expenditure limits. The huge head start is not enough to give him a comfortable lead, however, and the campaign is spinning heavily against the viability of the other big names. "With the 208 limits, it is enormously difficult, if not impossible, for anyone who is not an established statewide figure, who does not have a statewide fund-raising base, to be a viable candidate in 1998," argues Garry South, Davis' chief consultant, with a clear eye toward Panetta.

Whatever the candidates' public timetables, the field will solidify quickly come June, when 208's temporary fund-raising ban is lifted and candidates will need to scramble to start raising money under the $500 or $1000 contribution caps — assuming they are still in effect. From that point on, the candidates will struggle to position themselves for the brave new world of open primaries — assuming that law is still in effect, too.

One final bit of legal bedrock also may give way. As of this writing, a federal judge was deemed likely to overturn the state's term limits law, either completely or in part. This could crack the door for a third Wilson term, a topic of only half-jesting speculation in Sacramento circles. Confidantes of the governor — who supported the term limits proposition in 1990 — say Wilson is not interested in another term.

But the governor has cried wolf before.

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Southern Exposure

perspective

by Sherry Bebitch Jeffe

Michael Capizzi

Can a high-profile district attorney, dogged by major prosecutorial bungles, survive in the political arena?

No, this is not a rehash of the uphill victory last November of Los Angeles County District Attorney Gil Garcetti, whose failed prosecution of O.J. Simpson came back to haunt him in the election. This time the question of competence clouds the political future of another prosecutor — Orange County District Attorney Michael Capizzi.

Nearly two years after Orange County declared bankruptcy, former County Treasurer Robert Citron, whose risky investments triggered the crisis, drew the first jail sentence arising from indictments sought by Capizzi. But Citron received just one year in jail and a $100,000 fine. Willful-misconduct charges were filed by the D.A. against two supervisors — both Republicans, as is Capizzi — who helmed county government during the financial crisis. The charges recently were thrown out by an appeals court.

Capizzi's investigation of campaign irregularities in the 1995 special election to replace former Assembly Speaker Doris Allen led to fraud indictments against Allen's successor, Republican Scott Baugh, and two others, including a staffer of GOP Congressman Dana Rohrabacher. Seventeen of 22 counts filed against Baugh were dismissed by an Orange County Superior Court judge, who ruled prosecutors withheld evidence about a key witness' truthfulness. Most charges against Baugh have been refiled.

Capizzi's actions angered not only Orange County Republican powerhouses, but GOP leaders up and down the state. Calling the original indictments "part of a vendetta," Rohrabacher declared, "We have a D.A. who has gone berserk."

Despite all of this, Capizzi is touted as a possible GOP candidate for California attorney general. Orange County political observers say that has long been Capizzi's goal. But is it real? What might the D.A.'s political prognosis be?

The Orange County Annual Survey, recently released by UC Irvine, shows that residents have become more upbeat. Optimism about the local economy is at the highest point since the survey began tracking that trend in 1992. Anger over the bankruptcy has subsided. Those markers are good news for elected leaders. Interestingly, as worries over the county's fiscal crisis have subsided, crime has returned to the top of the list of the county's most important problems. Public focus on Capizzi's bailiwick could prove to be a danger or a boon to the D.A. Fighting crime can help him build a record of achievement for the next campaign. Appearing to fail will further tarnish him.

Capizzi's image has suffered over the years. Look at some interesting *Los Angeles Times* Orange County poll data. Back in May 1994 — before the bankruptcy and right before Capizzi was handily re-elected — 34 percent of the county's voters gave him an "excellent" or "good" job-approval rating. Twenty-three percent rated his performance "fair" and only 7 percent rated it "poor." Fully 36 percent of the poll respondents registered "no opinion." By October 1996 — after all the publicity surrounding the bankruptcy and campaign-related prosecutions — the *Times* poll showed Capizzi's job-approval numbers had slipped. Only 20 percent of the voters rated his performance as "excellent" or "good." Twenty-four percent gave him a "fair" rating, and 8 percent "poor." Nearly half the respondents (48 percent) registered "no opinion," a higher percentage than in 1994. According to pollster Mark Baldassare, that may be a function of "a lot of people ... ambivalent about the kind of job Capizzi is doing." The message, said Baldassare, is that the Baugh and bankruptcy prosecutions "have really not worked to his political advantage."

How does that translate into a statewide run? Not very well. Deputy Attorney General David Stirling, another Republican attorney general possibility, can claim the Northern California GOP base. Orange County should be Capizzi's natural base; but poll numbers — coupled with conservatives' anger — argue against that. However, this is old arithmetic.

The new open primary *might* work in Capizzi's favor. According to a recent *Times* poll, Orange County Democrats think more highly of Capizzi than do his fellow Republicans. Almost a quarter of the Democrats surveyed (24 percent) gave the D.A. an "excellent" or "good" job-approval rating, as compared with only 17 percent of GOP respondents. And data from the Annual Survey indicate Orange County Democrats tend to reflect the "moderate middle" currently so critical in California elections.

One GOP political consultant argues that Capizzi has "a great story to tell statewide," despite his recent losses. He has a solid record of political corruption convictions going back to his days as a staff prosecutor in the 1970s, and continuing with his election as D.A. in 1990. Said this observer, "voters are horribly distrustful of politicians. The old stuff [convictions] is what he'll play on."

It might work. It did for Garcetti, who highlighted his office's successful prosecution rate to help deflect criticism stemming from the Simpson criminal case. But Garcetti waged an aggressive campaign and he had money to get his message out. Capizzi, said one Orange County observer, "hasn't done *anything* to position himself for A.G."

Assuming Proposition 208 withstands judicial scrutiny, the just-passed campaign finance reform could present a significant obstacle to Capizzi (see page 12). Smart wannabes began stockpiling funds well before the December 1996 cut-off for raising political money under the old rules. Capizzi didn't. That, said one political observer, has put Capizzi "almost out of it," because he lost much of his available money base in the wake of the Baugh and bankruptcy prosecutions.

All elected district attorneys face an inevitable tension between their duties as prosecutors and their roles as politicians. Garcetti opted to become aggressively political. Capizzi has been aggressively prosecutorial. The question for Orange County's D.A. is whether that has been politically wise.

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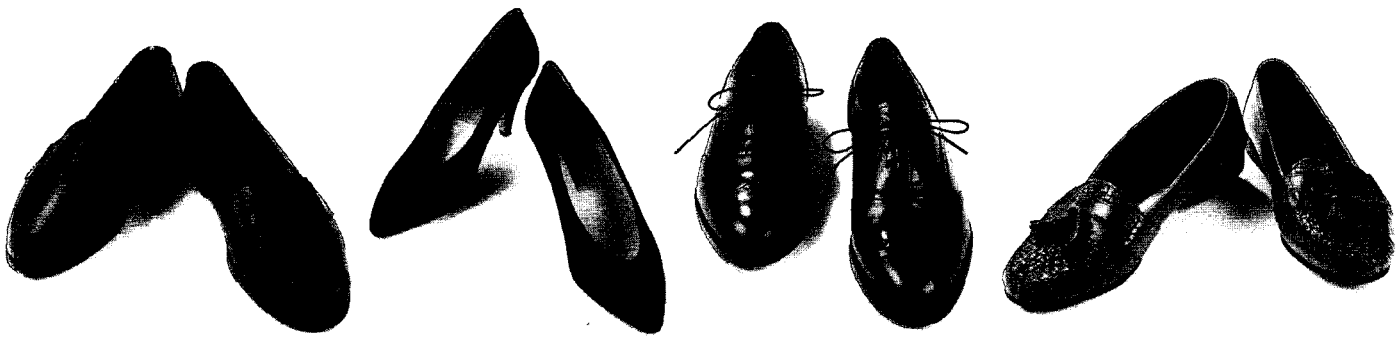

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The Bottom Line

government finance

by Susan Rasky

Proposition 208

Thank heaven for the steadfast campaign finance reformers who have brought us Proposition 208 and thus rescued an entire generation of political writers from the drudgery of policy coverage. Just when it seemed that endlessly analyzing the impact of term limits was to be our only hope in 1997, (the wretched debate enlivened perhaps by a court ruling on their constitutionality) comes this luscious 208 plum to carry us through the dry season between election cycles — and probably well beyond. So vexingly cross-wired are the measure's provisions, so irritatingly muddled and misguided are the reforming impulses of its authors and supporters that those of us who cover or merely seek to follow the political process can now safely count on 208 for an inexhaustible supply of stories on the law of unintended consequences.

Already the journalistic bounty is evident. In the two months since California voters approved the measure, we have been able to chronicle the unseasonable fund-raising frenzy in Sacramento as legislators scrambled to pay off campaign debt and line their 1998 war chests before the new law's stringent limits on contributions, restrictions on political party activity and assorted inducements for "voluntary" limits on spending took effect on January 1. With the law now in place, comes the opportunity for covering what promises to be glorious mayhem as lawyers for the various political players mount their constitutional challenges and the state's major interest groups reconfigure themselves as independent expenditure committees, employing the professional campaign consultants who once worked for candidates.

Picture it. Richie Ross calling the shots from the teachers' association or Ray McNally directing political traffic for the prison guards. Maybe some of the bigger hitters in the third house will have to hire entire teams of consultants from both parties, just to cover all the bases. The seating arrangements at political strategy sessions should be interesting.

The best part, journalistically speaking, is that all this new campaign maneuvering will be conducted under the watchful eyes of the Fair Political Practices Commission, quite possibly the weakest and least effectual regulatory body in the state. Post-initiative machinations are always good for lawyers and generally good for political consultants, but it's rare that a successful ballot measure so directly serves the hot copy needs of humble scribes and pundits. If we're lucky, we'll never have to bother interviewing candidates or visiting legislative districts again.

Our welfare was probably not on the minds of Common Cause, the League of Women Voters and the American Association of Retired Persons when they joined forces to promote 208. But presumably some notion of the voting public's welfare was. That's what makes the drafting history and likely fall out of this measure so intriguing. Were the reformers really naive enough about how the political process operates to believe that their handiwork would produce "grass roots" campaigns and precinct walking candidates? Did it not occur to them that they were creating a system in which the very interest groups whose influence they purport to despise will now control the entire campaign through independent expenditures, unaccountable *by law* to either candidates or political parties and least of all to the public? Or, were the reformers simply so arrogant in their particular beliefs about how money should and shouldn't be spent in politics that they were prepared to create new anomalies and disparities among political donors and recipients and pretend that these are somehow different or preferable to the existing ones?

Kim Alexander, director of the California Voter Foundation and the former executive director of California Common Cause, says one of the reasons she left the organization was frustration with an agenda that seemed to rule out any consideration of how much it actually costs to communicate with voters in a state like California. "The reform community devotes a great deal of time to tracking and analyzing the sources of where campaign money is raised and very little time on where it is spent," she said. "I voted 'No' on 208 because all it's going to do is intimidate prospective candidates and push the money out of sight."

Attorney Joe Remcho, whose firm is handling the court challenges from Democratic candidates and the PACs and other contributors traditionally allied with them says 208's drafters were clearly not naive in classic sense of word. "I think some of the bizarre consequences of the initiative grow out of their effort to try and test the limits of existing campaign finance laws and comply with them at the same time," he said.

John Mueller, a partner at the firm representing the Republican Party and assorted GOP candidates and interest groups in the court challenges, said such efforts notwithstanding, a number of the provisions in 208 appear to be unconstitutional on their face and thus ripe for injunctions. The two firms, which are coordinating their work with Lance Olson, who is representing the Democratic Party, hope the courts will either toss out or put on hold most of 208's provisions early this year but expect that some of the thornier issues, particularly the question of whether 208's contribution limits are reasonable, will have to go to trial.

In the meantime, Mssrs. Remcho, Olson and Neilsen are fielding calls from anxious lawmakers and lobbyists worried about how to navigate the perilous cross-currents created by interaction of the new campaign finance rules, the uncertainty over term limits and the advent of the open primary in 1998. Business in 208 workshops is booming — including a money-maker by the authors. The initiative, which prohibits fund raising for legislative offices until six months prior to the primary, was designed to eliminate all that unseemly campaign fretting in off years because Common Cause thought it would be better for lawmakers to concentrate on policy matters.

Last time we checked, nobody in Sacramento was running workshops on welfare reform.

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Standing Tall:
Canadian Forest Practices

by Claudia Buck

Sturdy as a tree trunk, Greg Richmond has all the trappings of a typical logger. Mustached and muscled, sporting black suspenders and an elaborate tattoo of British Columbia on his forearm, Richmond looks every inch a logger.

But when he speaks, his words are not those of a traditional tree-cutter.

"We had a lot of nay-sayers when we started alternative logging but we're doing some good stuff," said the burly Richmond. "We're bringing timber off the mountain and nobody is looking at us and saying 'Those damn loggers.'"

Meet the new breed of logger, who symbolizes the progressive forestry practices that Canadians have embraced. By combining the best of old logging practices with newer techniques, such as the overhead cable logging done by Richmond, Canadians are tailoring their timber harvesting to fit each forest's special needs.

Canadian logger Greg Richmond

Loggers like Richmond are the bridge between the old and new — between the once-common notion that forests are an unlimited resource and the enlightened vision championed by Canada that forests are a legacy to be carefully managed for generations to come.

Today, Canadian efforts to manage forests while sustaining their economic, environmental, biological and recreational values have propelled the country into the forefront of forestry management worldwide. Canada is now a recognized leader in international efforts to responsibly govern this precious resource.

A New Approach

Canadians have long been aware that forests are more than just a logger's lumberyard. They are habitats for wildlife, safe harbors for fish, and a recreational haven for hunters and hikers. For Canada's Indian peoples (known as First Nations or Aboriginals), forests are a cultural and religious homeland.

And for all visitors, they will forever be a source of solace for the soul.

To meet the varied needs of these often competing interests, Canada embarked six years ago on an ambitious effort to develop a national consensus on how its forests should be governed.

Instead of a government document compiled by officials in the nation's capitol, the public discussions took place in town halls across the country. Over the course of 18 months, comments and input were gathered from thousands of private citizens, environmentalists, academicians, loggers, industry representatives, woodlot owners and Aboriginals.

As a result of this extensive public discussion, a forest strategy was adopted that is the most representative and inclusive of local opinion of any in Canadian history.

"It was quite a turning point. It was the first attempt to say to the entire breadth of the forestry community: 'What do you want to see in our forests and how do we get there?'" said David Neave, executive director of Wildlife Habitat Canada and the acting chair of the Coalition for the National Forest Strategy.

Adopted in 1992, Canada's National Forest Strategy is a thoughtful, carefully drafted document that spells out 96 specific commitments to sustainable forest management nationwide. It is the country's road map to meeting the economic demands placed on forests without harming their environmental and social gifts for generations to come.

Calling it "a major breakthrough," Neave said Canada's National Forest Strategy acknowledges for the first time that "the ecological values of the forest are paramount."

As such, the document redefines Canada's focus on forestry, shifting away from merely harvesting timber to recognizing the importance of the social and environmental wealth of forests: fish and wildlife, water quality, recreational opportunities and visual aesthetics.

An Economic and Environmental Giant

From the black spruce groves of Newfoundland to the ancient stands of British Columbia's rainforest, Canada is home to more than 1 billion acres of forest land, comprising 10 percent of the world's forests.

This vast expanse of forest—more than 10 times the size of California—is an unparalleled resource.

Unlike its neighbors to the south, most of Canada's forest land—94 percent—is publicly held, compared with only 32 percent in the U.S.

A National Forest Strategy, Sustainable Forests: A Canadian Commitment, adopted in 1992, sets a broad and progressive agenda for managing

Claudia Buck, a freelance journalist, recently toured Canadian forests with a group of American writers, educators and researchers.

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Canada's forests. Commitment was confirmed by government and non-government organizations, which signed the Strategy and Canada Forest Accord and are implementing the Strategy.

The federal role in forestry is largely in the areas of science and technology research, international relations and federal and indian reserve lands.

The day-to-day management of forest lands is primarily in the hands of each provincial government. Based on its own assessment, each province determines the amount of timber that can be harvested each year (known as the Annual Allowable Cut or AAC) as well as how much logging companies must pay for a broad spectrum of harvesting requirements, from the initial plans and public hearings to the final regeneration. This includes stumpage fees (for the right to log on government or Crown property) and the cost of protecting forests against insects, disease and fire.

Whether it's a furniture manufacturing company in Alberta or a logging camp in Quebec, forestry is a vital component of Canada's economy, employing roughly 1 in every 15 Canadians.

In 1995, forestry supported 337 communities across the country, where the local work force was employed in pulp mills, saw mills, logging camps, furniture factories and other wood product industries, as well as environmental restoration projects such as forest thinning and reseeding, road rebuilding, watershed improvement and stream enhancement.

As the world's leading exporter of forest products, including newsprint, pulp and lumber, Canada derives a substantial economic boost from its forests. In 1995, the total value of Canadian forest product exports was approximately $30 billion. Forests are also the backdrop to a $19-billion recreation and tourism industry.

Aside from the economic benefits that its forests offer, Canada is also mindful of the underlying environmental values that forests provide. Rich in diversity, Canada's forests encompass 140 species of trees, 300 species of birds and 200,000 species of animals and small organisms. Canada's canopy of trees provides a home for wildlife, moderates climate changes and covers the watershed for about 20 percent of the world's fresh water.

In an effort to maintain a healthy forest environment, Canada is working to rid its forests of chemical pesticides. In 1992, only 0.25 percent of Canada's commercial forests were treated with pesticides. Scientists are developing environmentally safe methods of pest control, such as natural bacterium and viruses, while forest managers are exploring harvesting and silvicultural techniques that make forests more naturally resistant to insects and disease.

Harvesting Alternatives

Traditional logging, under carefully prescribed conditions, still has a predominant place in Canada. However, across the country there are harvesting alternatives underway, depending on such factors as the site's tree species, the terrain (including the degree of slope), aesthetic considerations and the conditions necessary to encourage natural regeneration.

Selective logging — where only the oldest and largest trees are removed — is one such alternative that has become an increasingly viable way of harvesting timber.

Loggers such as Greg Richmond are pioneering selection harvesting, with the help of hand-picked crews chosen for their "cerebral" approach to new methods of logging.

With selective logging, rather than bringing in traditional feller-bunchers and other pieces of heavy equipment that can topple trees and trample terrain, loggers string up what is, in essence, a giant clothesline attached to metal towers across a stand of trees. Once a tree is felled by ground crews, it's clipped onto the "clothesline" and lifted up and out of the cutting area, eliminating the need for heavy equipment that can inadvertently wreak unnecessary damage on surrounding habitats and wildlife.

"It's a more delicate operation," explains Richmond, standing beside a hillside of Douglas fir that his company recently harvested in the Squamish Forest District of British Columbia. "But I've flown over this area in a helicopter and you have to be right over it to pick it out.

"Ten years ago, this would have been clear-cut. What we've done is taken a substantial harvest off this mountain but done it better than it was done in prior years. From a logger's point of view, it's exciting."

Given his reliance on alternative harvesting, does Richmond consider himself a so-called "eco-logger?"

Without a second's hesitation, Richmond responds: "If we're not all eco-loggers, we're not logging. I like to think that everything we do is ecologically sound."

Across the country, deep in the black spruce and jack pine forests of southern Quebec, the Lac Brodeuse logging camp exemplifies the strict harvesting policies that have become the norm.

The only access in and out of the camp is a single dirt road that meanders for miles through unbroken stands of spruce and pine. Although originally built for logging trucks, the same road is shared by campers, hunters and fishermen, who enjoy the unspoiled wilderness.

At the camp, a four-hour drive from Alma, Quebec, much of the preliminary logging operation takes place on computer. Before a single tree is identified for harvesting, its location is carefully mapped on a computerized database. The purpose is to pinpoint precisely which trees can be cut and which should remain.

Once the logging site has been de-

Quebec's forest system is based on two fundamental principles: productive forests must be maintained in perpetuity and the forest environment must be protected.

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This cutblock in Clayoquot Sound was logged selectively in 1995-96. Between 30 and 65 percent of the trees were retained to provide for regeneration and to protect scenic values. The large cutblocks in the background reflect earlier harvesting standards.

fined, foresters visit the site to sketch the operation pattern, including such details as exactly where and how the large fellers and skidders (hauling equipment) will maneuver, and the direction that felled trees will fall. The intent is to minimize the number of roadways and to avoid damaging younger, less mature trees.

The success of this cutting method has decreased substantially the need for reforestation by providing future stands of trees with several years' head-start on growth.

Four years after a site is logged, foresters will revisit to determine if any reseeding is needed. As in Canada's other provinces, the intent is to let nature regenerate itself, with seed planting done only when necessary to supplement a species. All regeneration is paid for by the logging company.

Elsewhere in Quebec, efforts are underway to boost the yield from each acre of harvestable forest, by such means as reducing the size of the cutting areas, by protecting natural regeneration, and by using tree plantation when needed.

As one forester noted: "We are not yet living in a forestry Eden here but we are not yet running down to hell, either."

A Catalyst for Change

When part of an ancient coastal rainforest was felled on a Vancouver Island mountainside in 1990, it sharpened the international focus on the controversy of clearcutting.

The place was Clayoquot Sound and it became a rallying cry for environmentalists worldwide, some of whom chained themselves to trees in local protests.

But Clayoquot Sound was more than just a scar on British Columbia's pristine landscape. It was a catalyst for change—for accelerating the process of public involvement in Canadian forest management.

The harvesting done on that Vancouver Island mountainside cleared a path toward more public input and it strengthened the resolve already underway in Canada to manage forests in a sustainable manner.

Above all, it forever changed the way Canadians think about their forests.

"There's been a major change in the way we do business," said Nancy Wilkin, Director of Habitat Protection in British Columbia's Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. "We got the world's attention and we've been busy making some real strides."

The Case for Clearcutting

The kind of large, continuous clearcutting that occurred between 1954 and 1990 in Clayoquot Sound on Vancouver Island could never be repeated there today.

As the result of greater public input, British Columbia tightened its stance in that area: clearcuts are smaller and more dispersed than ever before. Clearcutting is further restricted on unstable slopes, in visually sensitive areas and where wildlife habitats need protection.

In the areas of Clayoquot where logging is still permitted, new regulations have banished conventional harvesting methods. Because of Clayoquot's unique ecological makeup, an independent scientific panel developed recommendations for appropriate forestry practices in the region.

The changes undertaken in all Canadian provinces have drawn the attention of foresters worldwide, some of whom have traveled to Canada from the U.S., England and Germany for a first-hand look.

Dr. Douglas Allen, a board member of the national Society of American Foresters and a professor of forest entomology at State University of New York, is among those who have viewed some of

Canada has 10% of the world's forests. 12% of Canada's forests are protected.

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Canada's forestry practices firsthand. He believes Canadians have done a commendable job in recent years of balancing clearcutting with other silvicultural techniques.

"It's important to understand that clearcutting is not all bad," said D[illegible] Allen. "If done properly, it's a legiti[illegible] way to manage forests and minimize the amount of forest stress and disruption. If done on the right scale, it's duplicating nature."

Indeed, nature takes its own toll on forests, felling trees by fire, wind and insect infestations. In 1994, according to the National Forestry Database Program in Canada, about 15.5 million acres were burned in forest fires while another 29 million acres were lost to insects.

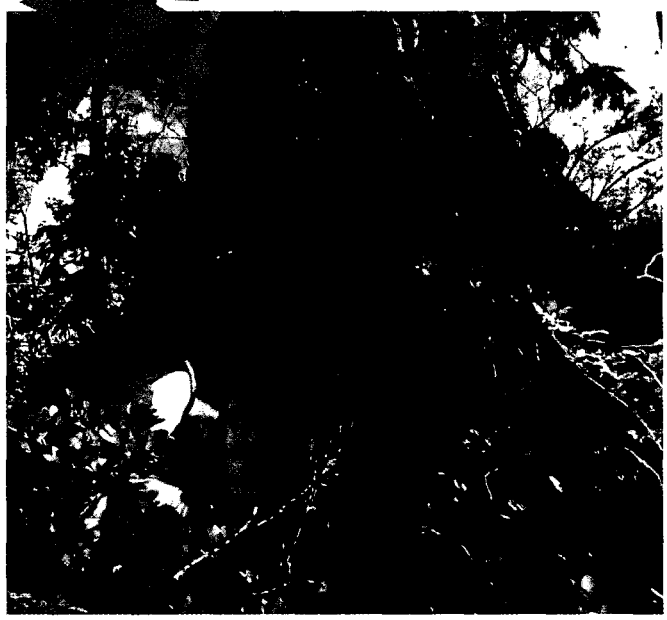
By contrast, only 2.4 million acres were removed by harvesting.

Across Canada, only one-half of 1 percent of the total commercial forest is harvested each year.

Not all environmentalists are entirely satisfied, however. In British Columbia, where emotions over clearcutting in Clayoquot Sound ran deepest, the Sierra Club gives grudging acknowledgment to the changes underway.

"It's a step in the right direction but the annual allowable cut has to come down," said Sharon Chow, Sierra Club spokeswoman. "We're concerned how clearcuts are done and what effect that logging will have in changing the whole ecosystem."

Throughout Canada's provinces, that concern is being addressed in a number of ways. Although each approach is unique, Canadian provinces are united in their conviction that forests must and can be sustainably managed.



Old living trees provide valuable habitat for the conservation of wildlife populations. Maintaining these wildlife trees within harvest areas can be ecologically beneficial. British Columbia's Forest Practices Code provides recommendations for their preservation.

Canada Looks Globally

Beyond its own borders, Canada is engaged internationally on a number of forestry fronts.

Recognizing the need for global collaboration on forestry, Canadians have aggressively pursued an international accord through the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). At its next session in February 1997, the panel will present recommendations on specific topics, including: national forests and land use plans, causes of deforestation, trade issues such as environmental certification, and the benefits of local community involvement in forestry planning.

[illegible] years ago, at the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development in Brazil, known as the Earth Summit, Canada urged adoption of guidelines that would provide a common understanding of the meaning of sustainable forestry management.

As part of that commitment, Canada is helping develop a set of internationally acceptable "criteria and indicators" that would describe, measure and evaluate a country's progress in implementing sustainable forestry practices.

Canada is one of 12 countries, which together comprise more than 90 percent of the world's temperate and boreal forests, that adopted a set of guidelines.

At the IPF meeting in February 1997, Canada will be joined by Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Russia, Uruguay and the U.S. in issuing a progress report on those guidelines.

To meet concerns of consumers worldwide, Canada also is exploring the possibility of certification, which would assure buyers that the lumber and paper products they purchase come from forests that are sustainably managed.

Likening it to a seal of approval on timber products, Jean-Claude Merc[illegible] chairman of the Canadian Standard Association's technical committee, said "It's a market instrument that industry and manufacturers want for their clients." But he cautioned that certification will be valuable only if there can be consensus on a mutually agreeable set of standards.

As for a hands-on approach, Canada's federal government oversees a network of 10 model forests, spread from British Columbia to Newfoundland, that serve as outdoor laboratories to study innovative forestry methods.

Ranging from 250,000 acres to 3.7 million acres in size, these model forests are study sites for such topics as the impact on forests of natural and human activities; the habitats that animals prefer in forests; and silvicultural techniques for managing old-growth forests.

Based on the worldwide attention these working forests have garnered, Canada is helping establish an international network of model forests in Malaysia, Mexico and Russia, as well as the United States.

In the U.S., three states—Washington, Oregon and California—have followed Canada's lead, establishing their own model forestry programs. California's model forest is a 500,000-acre site near Hayfork in Northern California.

A Canadian Commitment

From the red maple leaf emblazoned on its flag to the spectacular stands of coastal rainforest on the country's western edge, trees — and the forests they come from — are a vital part of Canada's national image.

Beginning with the first canoe carved from a tree centuries ago to the cancer-fighting drugs being harvested today from the bark of yew trees, Canada has never turned its back on its forest heritage. Nor has it forgotten its belief that "healthy forest ecosystems are essential to the health of all life on earth."

As stated in Canada's Forest Accord: "Our forest heritage is part of our past, our present and our future identity as a nation... Our forests are a natural resource whose care and stewardship is [illegible] interest to every Canadian and, in a [illegible]e, to all citizens of the

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Deadwood

Assembly battleground revealed

The 69th Assembly District sprawls through central Orange County, taking in most of Santa Ana, central Anaheim and some neighborhoods in Garden Grove. On paper, the 69th looks like a safe haven for Democratic candidates. According to the Secretary of State's Office, its 90,787 registered voters are 53.53 percent Democratic and only 33.05 percent Republican, with a smattering of voters signed up for eight other political parties and 9.47 percent registered as declined to state. Thus, Democrats hold a registration edge of 20.48 percent over the GOP.

But the district is represented by a Republican — Jim Morrissey, who recently was elected to a second term, albiet by a slim 93 votes.

As every political consultant this side of Mars understands, "registered voter" is not the same as "likely voter." The difference often is expressed as "deadwood" — those folks who exist on the rolls but seldom go to the polls. Now, Campaign Data Center of South San Francisco, creators of voter-targeting software called *Campaign Wargames,* has removed the deadwood to show the real registration advantages in each of the Assembly's 80 districts. For this purpose "deadwood" has been defined as any voter listed on the rolls but who has not actually voted in the decade of the 1990s.

Take "deadwood" out of the picture and the Democratic edge in the 69th shrinks to 13.58 percent — still substantial on paper but nowhere near as daunting as 20 percent. With help from Campaign Data Center, *California Journal* has divided the districts into five categories — solid Democratic, marginal Democratic, toss-up, marginal Republican and solid Republican (see chart 1). As that chart indicates, the task facing Republicans during each election is imposing, for 39 of the Assembly's 80 seats are listed as "solid Democratic," even with the deadwood removed. Three more are marginal Democratic seats. Republicans currently hold three solid Democratic seats (ADs 28, 30 and 69) and one marginal Democratic seat (AD 35). They also hold 10 of the 15 toss-up districts. Democrats, on the other hand, hold no marginal or solid Republican seats and only one-third of the toss-up districts, leading to the conclusion that either GOP voters display greater party loyalty or that Republicans are better at attracting independent and cross-over voters than are Democrats.

If nothing else, these two charts indicate where the battlegrounds may emerge in 1998 as strategists from both parties seek out districts with real opportunities for competition.

Occupant	Solid Dem (39 districts) Inc	Solid Dem (39 districts) Open	Marginal Dem (3 districts) Inc	Marginal Dem (3 districts) Open	Toss-up (15 districts) Inc	Toss-up (15 districts) Open	Marginal GOP (10 districts) Inc	Marginal GOP (10 districts) Open	Solid Gop (13 districts)
[illegible]									
Democrat	18	17	0	1	2	1	0	0	0 0
Republican	3	1	1	1	10	2	8	2	8 5
[illegible]									
Democrat	18	18	0	2	3	2	0	0	0 0
Republican	3	0	1	0	9	1	8	2	8 5

Strong Democrat: Democratic voter-registration edge greater than 11 points
Leans Democratic: Democratic voter-registration edge between 5.5 and 10.62 points
Toss-up: No party has voter-registration edge greater than 5 points
Leans Republican: GOP voter-registration edge between 5.6 and 11 points
Strong Republican: GOP voter-registration edge greater than 11 points
Inc: incumbent ran in 1996 — Open: Had no incumbent in '96 election

The '98 Battlegrounds

Toss-up Districts (15)

AD	Real Margin	SOS Margin	Incumbent
80	1.87 - D	5.90 - D	GOP
54	1.23 - D	5.51 - D	GOP
43	1.02 - D	6.50 - D	Dem
24	0.81 - D	2.74 - D	GOP
53	0.66 - D	2.01 - D	Dem*
76	0.59 - R	2.40 - D	Dem
61	0.87 - R	4.19 - D	GOP*
10	1.23 - R	1.12 - D	GOP*
44	1.71 - R	4.62 - D	Dem
60	1.81 - R	1.35 - D	GOP
25	1.94 - R	0.64 - D	GOP
5	4.54 - R	3.11 - R	GOP*
78	4.65 - R	2.53 - R	Dem
64	4.86 - R	2.56 - R	GOP
3	5.31 - R	4.23 - R	GOP*

Marginal Districts (13)

AD	Real Margin	SOS Margin	Incumbent
26	10.62 - D	17.37 - R	Dem
56	9.87 - D	13.11 - R	Dem
35	5.50 - D	7.62 - R	GOP
2	5.66 - R	4.99 - R	GOP
77	6.37 - R	4.25 - R	GOP
68	7.06 - R	4.66 - R	GOP*
38	7.12 - R	6.70 - R	GOP
37	7.52 - R	2.94 - R	GOP*
29	7.92 - R	7.08 - R	GOP
33	8.74 - R	4.28 - R	GOP
4	10.61 - R	10.72 - R	GOP
65	10.87 - R	6.92 - R	GOP
59	10.87 - R	7.07 - R	GOP

Real Margin = with deadwood removed
SOS Margin = Secretary of State's published margin
* = comes open in 1998 due to term limits

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Campaign view

Yes, Latino voters had an impact on selected races. But some Republican polling failed, precinct walking wasn't what it used to be, attack ads backfired, consultants had to raise money rather than just spend it, and the conventional wisdom about high-propensity voters got turned on its head. Other than that, 1996 was a normal year on the unicycle.

By A.G. Block

The toxic glow cast by Election '96 finally has dimmed. And although voters and the general population may breathe a sigh of relief, the campaign consultants whose livelihoods depend upon these biennial upheavals are sifting through the embers, seeking to understand the nature and personality of the recent bonfire. It is a necessary task, for therein may be found clues about how to maneuver through the next election. And after all, the first sparks of Election 1998 already are smoldering (see story, page 12).

It ain't easy being a political guru these days. The job entails enough day-to-day uncertainty and enough variety to make campaign consultants seem like jugglers on unicycles. So, what did all that juggling teach us in 1996? To answer that question, we sought out more than two dozen consultants involved with a variety of '96 efforts, from congressional and legislative races to statewide initiatives to local bond measures. Was 1996 unique, and what happened last year that could signal a trend?

At the outset, Latinos made a difference in selected races — a view that has been well documented in the media (see district-by-district analyses, *CJ*, December 1996).

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consultants election '96

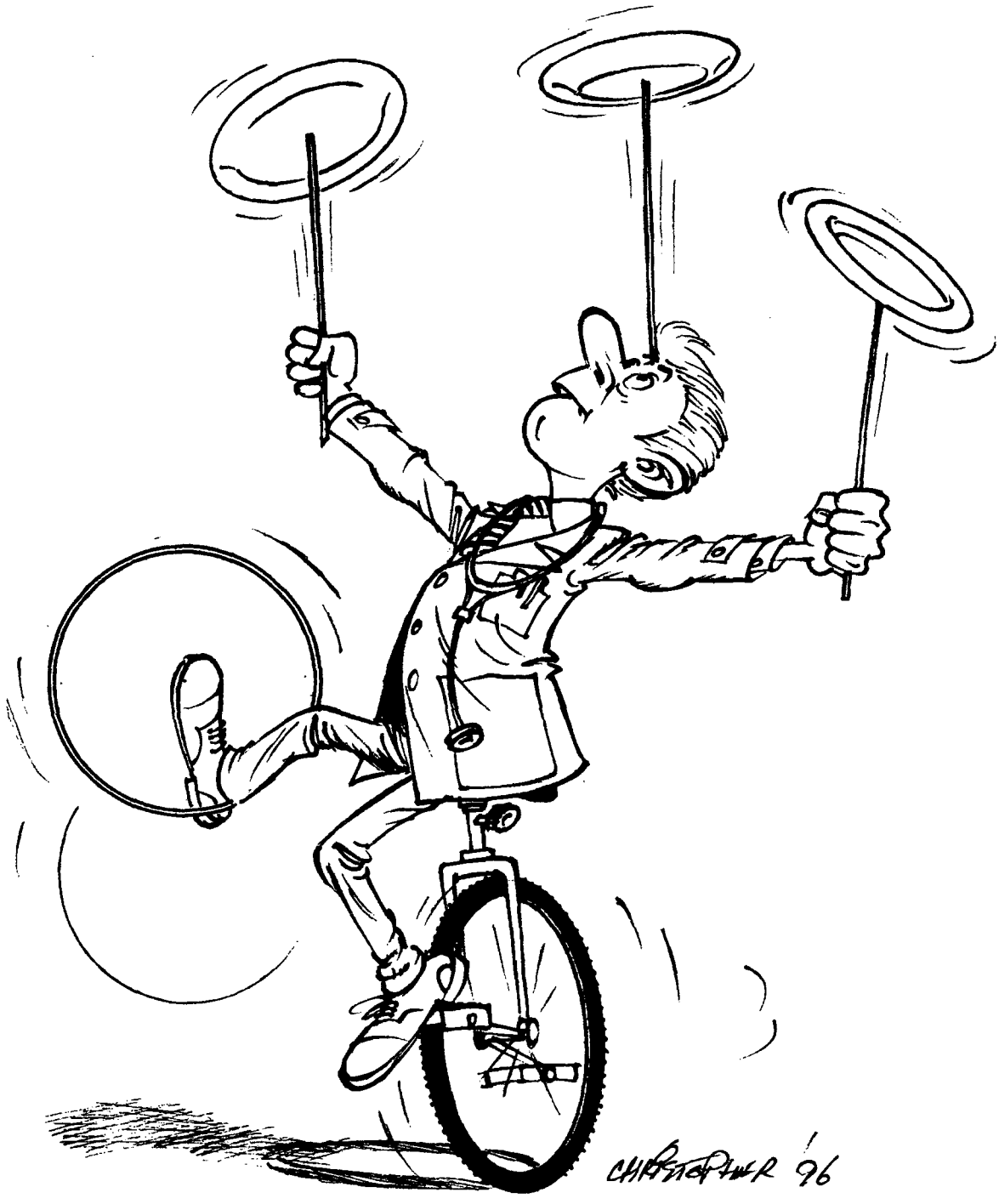

Illustration by Christopher

But beyond the Latino factor, what else happened?

Many consultants focused on turnout, and on the conventional wisdom about who is and who is not a high-propensity voter. In years past, it was assumed that Republicans held the edge among likely voters, but that equation seemed to turn on its head in 1996 as GOP campaigns complained openly about low turnout and the fact that a large chunk of its base simply stayed away from the voting booth. Reasons for the fall off varied. Some blamed demographics, others the party itself.

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More significant, the GOP "carpet-bombed its base." — Wayne Johnson

"The nature of the electorate has changed for Republicans," said GOP consultant Dave Gilliard of Sacramento, who managed 14 races last year. For the first time, said Gilliard, Republicans had a hard time motivating many of the "young Yuppies" who migrated to the party during the Reagan years. "Their lives aren't impacted by government," he said. "They are detached from government and involved with their families."

At the same time these baseline Republicans were detaching, Democrats were joining the ranks of high-propensity voters. "It's the aging of the baby boomers," explained Jeff Raimundo of Townsend Raimundo Besler & Usher of Sacramento. "And boomers tend to be Democrats."

Gilliard agreed. "The traditional Democratic electorate is aging," he said. "And older folks tend to vote. Democrats now are older voters and easily communicated with on issues like social security and medicare." This, said Gilliard, represents a long-term problem for the Republican Party. "We had success getting young people into the Republican Party," he warned, "but now we must motivate them. When Republican turnout falls to 60 percent, it kills us."

But other Republican consultants said the party's problems went beyond mutating demographics. Wayne Johnson of Sacramento blamed what he called "a dearth of ideas coming out of the national [Dole] campaign" and the attempt to stifle conservative elements within the GOP. "There was just a lack of Republican ideas," said Johnson, who won five of the eight legislative races he managed. "Instead, we campaigned on three strikes and Proposition 13 and other long-in-the-tooth issues."

More significant, said Johnson, the GOP "carpet-bombed its base." "There was a conscious attempt to mute the distinctives," he complained. "In some ways, there was out-and-out hostility. If, for example, the Republican Party mutes its support for the pro-life position, nobody shows up to man phone banks or walk precincts. Or to vote. A large part of the Republican base didn't believe in the national party." By contrast, Johnson noted, "Democrats don't repudiate folks in their base, even though they disagree with them."

On the other hand, Republican Sal Russo of Sacramento blamed GOP fall off on the cumulative effects of 16 years of negative campaigning. He harkened back to the 1980 elections when Republicans knocked off such high-profile Democratic U.S. senators as Idaho's Frank Church and Indiana's Birch Bayh by hammering each with an unprecedented series of attack ads. "It was the first time that the negative campaign became effective," said Russo, adding that it changed the conventional approach by the targets of such ads. Instead of ignoring attack ads, as Church and Bayh attempted to do, the targets responded in kind. As a result, "each cycle has become more and more negative."

Today, said Russo, voters have grown weary of nonstop negative campaigning because all they hear are candidates attacking one another. They rarely hear about vision or programs. Echoing Gilliard, Russo said that "voters no longer see the political system as relevant to their lives. So, they have little stake in an election."

This detachment hits the GOP harder at this point than it does Democrats because it applies more to younger voters; older voters nearing retirement nearly always feel vested enough in government to vote. The result: no shows among younger GOP voters.

Turnout also was affected by voter lifestyles. The economy was improving. The country was at peace. Life was good. As a result, many voters simply never tuned into the election until very late in the game. And when they did tune in, they may not have liked what they found.

One critical campaign tactic affected by changing lifestyles in 1996 was precinct-walking. "The best way to get a vote," said Los Angeles Democratic consultant Larry Levine, "is to look a voter in the eye, shake a voter's hand and ask for a vote. But today, a lot of people aren't home. It used to be that, at the worst time of day, you'd find 40 percent of the people home. Now, you're lucky if you get 40 percent at the best time of the day."

But even that 40 percent was barely focused on elections until late October, as evidenced by the large number of undecided voters showing up in poll after poll all through the fall.

"It was very difficult to get the voters' attention," said GOP consultant

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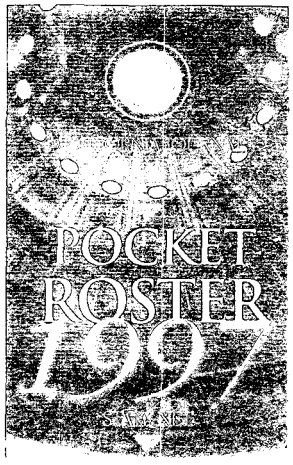

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Ray McNally of Sacramento. "We felt like we were playing to an empty concert hall."

"The electorate largely fell asleep on Labor Day through late October," said Lee Stitzenberger of the Dolphin Group.

Wayne Johnson blamed the long period between the March primary and November election for much of the public's ennui, and for complicating the running of a campaign. "It threw the timing off,' said Johnson. "Some campaigns tried to run through the summer and ran out of money. Others tried to shut down and then to revive, which was tough for on-site people."

Stitzenberger added that the confluence of a long campaign season and short voter attention span made allocation of campaign resources more critical. Mistakes were amplified, as many consultants noted regarding supposedly safe Republican Assembly districts that eventually went Democratic. "Republicans failed to devote the money and effort to nail down those districts early in the campaign," said one observer, referring to races in the 26th, 43rd, 56th and 78th districts (see *CJ*, December 1996). "They let Democrats back into the game."

Because voters dropped in late, they were treated to the election's final frenzy when most campaigns involved in tight races went highly negative. Result: more alienation.

Some in the trade believe, however, that the universe of nonstop negative campaigning may have run its course, and that 1996 was the watershed. Tupper Hull of the PBN Company thinks the political awakening by California's well-heeled high-tech community signaled a change in the atmospherics. "This is a revolutionary change in California," said Hull. "They understand that government has an impact on their operations, and they understand the need for the high-tech community to be smart and involved and engaged in the process over the long run." According to Hull, high-tech, which largely financed the $40 million effort to beat Proposition 211, has enough financial clout to force campaigns to focus on issues rather than on personalities or candidate-bashing.

The high-tech community, Hull said, does not view politics as an end in itself but as a means to an end, and it takes a dim view of politics as a game. "The Silicon Valley," explained Hull, "is not partisan. They are very problem-solving oriented, and they view problems within the government sector as problems that can be solved."

In the short run, however, consultants were divided over whether 1996 saw the beginning of the end of negative campaigning.

McNally, for instance, was among those who felt that negative campaigning still was king. "It worked again this year," said McNally, who said that two of his state Senate candidates — Phil Hawkins in the 27th District and Richard Rainey in the 7th — were targets of relentless and misleading ads about their positions on gun control and tobacco. Rainey won, but Hawkins lost to Democrat Betty Karnette.

"It's as bad as I've ever seen it," agreed GOP consultant Alan Hoffenblum, referring to negative campaigns run against his clients — deposed U.S. Representative Bill Baker of Walnut Creek; Republican Dan Walker,

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who lost to Democrat Debra Bowen in the 53rd Assembly District; and Lynn Leach, who narrowly won in a heavily Republican 15th Assembly District. "Veracity is no longer a cogent word."

Phil Giarizzo, a Democratic consultant who ran a bevy of legislative races, said the negative or attack ad still has its place in the campaign arsenal. "Politics is a war of ideas," he said. "And you have to point out people's records. And pointing out record, ideology and what I would consider 'bad' candidates for the right reasons is a public service." But Giarizzo said that attacks must be accurate and what consultant Stephen Sheldon of the REX Company in Los Angeles called "believable."

Yet other consultants noticed signs that the era of negative campaigning is coming to an end.

"There was a hunger among voters for a focused, positive message and with a plan," said Harvey Englander of the Kamber Group in Los Angeles. "There had to be more than 'the other person is awful.'"

Democratic consultant Parke Skelton of Los Angeles saw negative ads backfire when used against his candidates, especially Adam Schiff, who defeated Republican Paula Boland in the 21st Senate District. "They never established any positive story about Boland," he said. "All they did was slime Adam, and they destroyed their own campaign."

Skelton cited a survey, taken in mid September when Boland had five pieces in the mail and Schiff but one. "The poll showed that Boland's own negative material made folks less interested in supporting her by a two-to-one margin," Skelton said. "That shows me that something was wrong."

Raimundo, too, cites evidence that negative ads actually helped the target of those ads. In one of his campaigns, the target was then-Assemblyman Byron Sher (D-Palo Alto), who was running in a special state Senate election last March against Republican Patrick Shannon. "Shannon was closer to Sher when he campaigned on the issues," Raimundo recalled. "But when he went highly negative, the gap widened dramatically. It had the opposite effect Shannon wanted."

Polling, long a fundamental tool of political campaigns, also proved a problem for some consultants. Tracking polls especially came under fire for two reasons — accuracy for Republicans and proliferation for Democrats.

"One of the unusual things about '96 was the unreliability of polling data," said Wayne Johnson. "The problem was methodological: Nobody is answering their phones. Seventy percent of the people are screening their calls, which limits the universe of respondents to the point that you can't count on representative samples."

Pollsters, however, took a different view. "[Johnson's] old arguments have been around for years," said Gary Lawrence, a GOP pollster based in Orange County. "The resistence rate, the hang-up rate, the refusal rate still is within acceptable margins. Most people participate once they know they won't be sold something."

If Republicans had a problem with polls, said Lawrence, it stemmed from assumptions made about the data. "We no longer ask, 'What did the polls say?' Instead, we ask, 'Which turnout model did we run the data through?' Because the number of voters turning out is declining, we need to find out who will turn out to vote. In some elections, we

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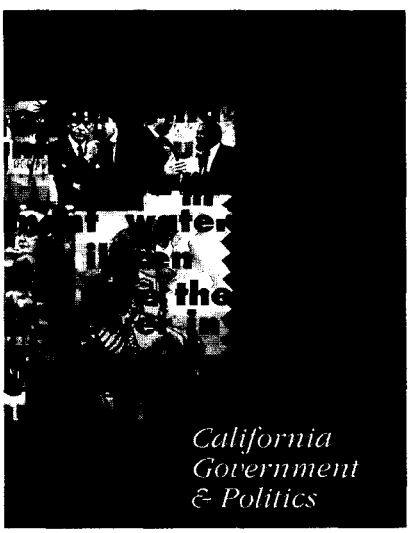

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use 10 or more turnout models."

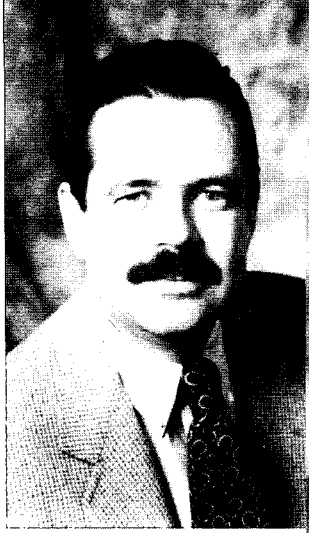
Lawrence also agreed with an assessment made by Democratic pollster John Fairbank of Los Angeles, who indicated that Republicans may not have done enough polling in critical legislative races where large numbers of undecided voters lingered in the equation until late in the game. "One of the ideas behind polling early and often," said Fairbank, "is to try to create a profile of the undecided voter. In many legislative races, you have to poll early and often to watch the movement of voters. Many Democrats and independents moved late, and we were able to help the Assembly caucus target those undecideds with a message they wanted to hear."

But that "early and often" strategy, although helpful, caused problems. According to Democratic consultant Gale Kaufman of Sacramento, every group with two nickels to rub together commissioned its own tracking poll before it would part with even one of those nickels. "Everybody and their mother was doing polls," she said, referring to large special-interest donors such as teachers, trial lawyers, labor and business groups. "It's one thing to have informed folks reading those polls, and another to try to educate people who are not used to what the numbers mean. It was difficult to make a case for a client when all this data was floating around, and when you didn't contract for the data or have any say in reading it."

Kaufman also said that the sheer number of people performing tracking polls in critical districts sometimes conflicted with her candidates' phone operations. "On any given night of the week," she said, "we couldn't get through with paid phoning [phone banks] because of all of the folks doing polling. In one week, there might be three polls in one district by three different entities — none of whom were the [Assembly] candidate."

Fairbank associate Sharon Pinkerton estimated that as many as a dozen firms may have conducted legislative tracking polls during Election '96, but she said that those polls ultimately benefited the campaigns. "It shows interest in the races," she said. Added Fairbank. "The Assembly leadership correctly made sure they had enough and timely information to get resources to the proper places."

Because the polls themselves were used by special interests to help determine where to put their resources, the burden of getting a share of those resources often fell to consultants in 1996 — another change from years past, especially for Democrats. "In previous campaigns," said Kaufman, "I just spent the money. I never had to get it. High-profile campaigns never had to worry about being funded, but this time I had to spend time selling my clients" to lobbyists and special interests with big money to contribute. She said uncertainty in Assembly Democratic leadership fueled a freelance system of campaign funding — and begging. "You had no assurance that you would get funded until late in the game," she said. "So, you ended up hustling ..."



Ray McNally

Wayne Johnson

Gale Kaufman

On a more personal note for consultants, Leo McElroy of Sacramento noted a decline in what he called the "loyalty factor." "It used to be if a consultant served you well, you stayed with that consultant for a long time," said McElroy, a former journalist who runs a communications firm. "[Today], there is an increasing tendency to shop around."

Finally, several consultants pointed to the unusually large number of close races for Congress and the Legislature, and to the number of "clustered races" spread across the map. According to as yet unofficial results, 15 district races were decided by less than 5000 votes. All but two of those races also overlapped with high-stakes races for some other legislative body.

"California could be entering a permanent era of marginality," said consultant Don Solem of San Francisco. "The closeness in that number of legislative races is unprecedented, and in could also be true in supervisorial races. Convincing [legislative] majorities could be a thing of the past."

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The Politics of

"There's a sucker born every minute."

— P.T. Barnum
19th century "press agent"

"Any paperhanger or car salesman can call himself a public relations practitioner, just as Nixon's henchmen did — and we all know what happened to them."

— Edward Bernays
founder of modern P.R.

Just before his 94th birthday in 1985, Edward Bernays — adviser to at least four American presidents and countless captains of industry and widely credited as a founder of modern-day American P.R. — expounded in an interview about the vagaries of a profession he sought, with limited success, to hold to a higher ethical standard. He didn't use the word, but he deplored the ascension of the practitioners of "spin" — he called it "press agentry" — to push products, ideas and politicians.

"It's like a drug company taking over a medical school," he said.

Some contemporary press agents might well compare their trade to that of drug salesmen, and most admit that — despite Bernays' high-minded efforts to make P.R. a "real" profession, with clear academic and ethical standards — the field is clearly becoming more prone to manipulation, less a function of simply getting the information to the public in a clear and perhaps nicely packaged way.

And nowhere is that manipulation more controversial than when it is practiced under the aegis of the state.

In California, government-funded P.R. is practiced by a variety of generally well-paid staff — many in civil service positions and many others in the sometimes murky, politically charged arena of state employees in positions "exempt" from civil service. They are called press secretaries and public information officers (the latter is the official civil service title), communications directors, "special assistants" and heads of offices with intriguing, but not particularly descriptive, titles such as "Public Awareness" and "External Affairs."

"My sense is that the PIO jobs have been increasingly politicized," says longtime Associated Press political writer John Howard, echoing the views of other journalists who cover the state Capitol. "The highest-level P.R. people are hired totally through the governor's office. I can't

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Government P.R.

By Sigrid Bathen

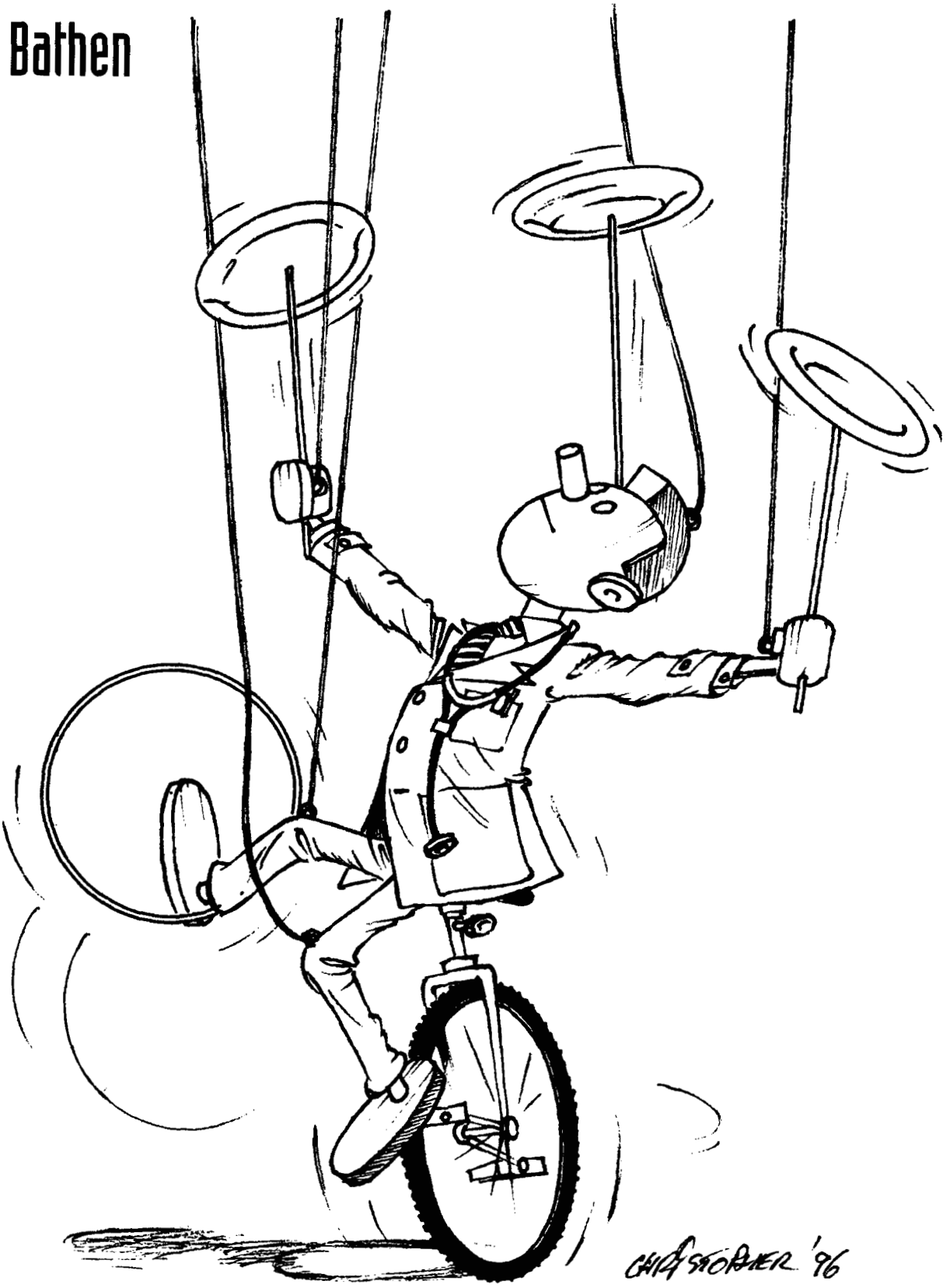

Illustration by Christopher

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remember a time when it was so centralized."

Reporters say the generally miserable media image of Governor Pete Wilson is in large measure the result of partisan politics and manipulative press policies which, particularly in recent years, permeate state agencies — whose directors, after all, are appointed by the governor. "Reporters look for a basic benchmark of accuracy from professional press people," says Howard, "and now they have to wade through the spin. Sometimes you can trust the spin doctor — and a few of them I do. . .But if I had to choose between PIOs who had taken an exam, or deal only with political appointees, I'll take the PIOs."

Many present and former PIOs, most of them former reporters and editors, agree. "It's become very political," says one retired PIO who asked not to be named. "The problem is, and it's endemic, that the governor appoints people to be chief of information who don't know about it. They're young. They're arrogant. And they'll say their mother knows the governor... "Another retired PIO said the Wilson administration increasingly in recent years would approach agency heads about "photo ops for the governor... You would kind of be expected during the next week to find an occasion or an event that the governor could get some publicity from. I was never real enamoured of that process. It was political bullshit."

Vince Vandre, a former reporter and editor who was a senior state information officer for nearly 30 years, says flatly: "I wouldn't survive 10 minutes in that arena today. The information officers were originally there to help the public understand what was going on. Now it's just to exalt some political figure at state expense."

Other PIOs find that assessment unduly harsh. "Most of the PIOs are hard-working — gathering facts, answering questions," said one longtime PIO. "Most of us are simply trying to get the information out." In high-profile state agencies, the volume of media calls can be staggering. Kati Corsaut, an information officer with the state Department of Corrections said her department's communications office responds "on average" to some 2,000 press calls per month, on subjects ranging from inmate riots to the square footage of a prison cell.

According to the state Personnel Board, there are currently only 75 official civil-service information officers (PIOs) throughout the state, a precipitous drop from 1992, when there were 128 — the result, in large measure, of legislation which nearly succeeded in abolishing the class and prompted many state agencies to reclassify their PIOs to other civil-service jobs with more generic titles. Chris Weinstein, president of the State Information Officers Coun-

Phil Guthrie — An appreciation ... without spin

When Ray Procunier became director of the state Department of Corrections in 1967, he told Phil Guthrie, the agency's information officer, that he didn't have to write any more press releases — an edict in state government some might regard as tantamount to closing the doors. What in the world would there be to do?

"No more goddamned press releases," ordered the legendary state prison director, a blunt, up-from-the-ranks former prison guard with a sometimes indelicate command of language, often described as "tough-talking" by reporters unable to quote him directly in their family newspapers. "Just answer their *(expletive deleted)* questions."

And he did. For more than two decades, under five directors, Guthrie, who died last Sept. 16 at age 67 after a long, tortuous battle with cancer, talked to reporters, got them the information they needed — or told them why he couldn't. His office was spare, often untidy, with an old manual typewriter in one corner.

Procunier, now retired and living in Grass Valley, remembers their first meeting. "We had an agreement — I wanted him to tell the truth regardless of what it was. He was in on every meeting, so I didn't have to interpret anything. He travelled with me. We didn't have anything to hide." They became close friends, weathering death threats and bomb threats, '70s prison unrest and frequent controversy.

Although he had about him an aura of sometimes harried disorganization, Guthrie was one of the most focused, disciplined bureaucrats I have ever known, and, especially important to reporters, his information was reliable and accurate. In the "de-institutionalization" era of the 1970s, when the numbers were as important, in a somewhat different way, as they are today, he kept a hand-written chart of the number of inmates in each prison on the wall by his phone, regularly updating it so he would be able to answer reporters' questions about rapidly changing inmate populations. He was unflaggingly good-humored, frequently — and sometimes inadvertently — hilarious, in a business that would drive a lot of people up, or at least against, the wall. In one of many Guthrie fables, and this one is true, he once set his wastebasket afire with a cigarette, then got his foot caught and his pants leg lit when he tried to stomp it out, finally dousing the flames with a carafe of cold coffee — all the while talking calmly, not missing a

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cil, says the organization currently has about 80 members, and SIOC estimates the number of PIOs statewide at about 100. Since so many were reclassified in recent years, getting an exact number is difficult. The statewide exam for PIOs — which differs from previous exams in that it apparently will not require either a writing sample or an oral interview during the statewide screening process — was recently offered for the first time in at least seven years. Department heads and PIOs currently in state service, whose advancement was limited by the lack of an exam, are relieved the exam was finally offered. But others express concern that the timing and methodology of the exam give too much control to department heads appointed by the governor and may be a legal method of easing existing political appointees into civil service jobs before the end of the Wilson administration in 1998 — an allegation sharply denied by representatives of the governor.

The number of state employees performing media-related work in exempt, appointive positions and so-called Career Executive Appointments or CEAs — which, unlike the exempts, are drawn from state employees and must pass through certain civil service hoops, often oral interviews — is much more difficult to pinpoint than the PIOs. As of November 26, 1996, the personnel board listed 1351 exempts throughout the state. These do not include legislative jobs and are generally high-level positions appointed by constitutional officers and agency heads without regard to civil service requirements — a fact which many critics say is increasingly common, the result of partisan political influences and a worrisome erosion of the reasonably objective civil service standards. Many exempts and CEAs are in media positions, but because their titles vary, they're often hard to identify — as are their salaries, which are generally higher than the PIOs, who start at $2853 per month (for assistant information officers) and rise to $4994 for the top PIO-II classification and $6109 for the very rare PIO-III.

Whatever their official title, political ties or civil service status, state flacks perform essentially the same tasks: they issue press releases and answer media questions about the significant and the mundane, organize press conferences, write and edit speeches and op-ed articles for their bosses' bylines, handle a plethora of newsletters, reports, brochures, public service announcements and other tools of the trade. Historically, they are trained journalists, although that requirement, which many say is fundamental to the job, is sometimes eschewed as merely one of many "media skills" required for entree to this elite and powerful government fraternity. Although "public information" is at the core of their duties, political considerations have

beat — as a colleague looked on, aghast.

He always returned phone calls and he knew the department he represented inside out. He knew which guy to talk to about interpreting the sometimes bewildering numbers, how to reach the warden during a prison riot, who to talk to about getting an interview with an inmate on Death Row.

He told prison staff throughout the state that, no matter what time or where he was, he was to be immediately informed of reporters' inquiries. As cynicism and spin threaten to eclipse the free flow of information in government, and certainly in politics, he was a breed apart — a true believer, in the best sense, in the constitutional guarantee of a free press and the sanctity of the public's right to know what its government is doing. As a legal affairs writer for the *Sacramento Bee*, I covered the state prisons during the tumultous 1970s. It was a time of unprecedented violence and rebellion within the prisons, and prisoners were staging protests and filing lawsuits. Some of the protests and lawsuits detailed egregious physical and racist conditions, and I am reminded of that time as I read about the problems the Department of Corrections is having today at its embattled institution in Corcoran, and wondering how Phil would handle reporters' questions. "He'd tell them the truth," says Procunier.

The only flack ever to receive the Society of Professional Journalists Freedom of Information award, from the Central Valley chapter, Phil was a favorite with reporters, though sometimes we gave him hell, trying to get him to give us confidential information (he refused, universally), or an exclusive on a big story (no way).

It was a difficult time to be the spokesman for the state prisons — if there ever is an easier time — and Guthrie handled it with professionalism, sensitivity, humor and flair. After a brief stint with Procunier when the latter was imported to run the troubled Texas state prisons, he retired 10 years ago to his house in Bodega Bay, which he used to loan to friends free of charge. Before he became ill, he had a good, long decade with his wife Mary, whom he met at a University of the Pacific reunion. They remodeled their ramshackle beach house, with its stunning view of the bay, and he even stopped smoking several years before his death.

Cancer of the esophagus is a nasty way to go. He survived a horrendous operation then baffled all the doctors by living nearly two years after that. Around the time of his last Christmas, he sent me a long, beautifully written, alternately sad and funny letter, an article really, in which he told how pleased he was to hear from the many reporters and editors — the names were a veritable Who's Who of California journalism, old friends all — who had called, written or visited. Given his condition, it was amazing he could write at all, much less be funny as hell. He said he wrote because it "gives me something to do besides dose myself with shark cartilage — a form of voodoo medicine we cancer patients go to when all else seems ineffective." And he said the "nice part" about this "otherwise crummy experience" was "the way so many of the people one knows, from numerous differing lifetime phases, get in touch. . .On the whole, it reaffirms my belief that people are basically pretty nice."

Having lost a good chunk of his esophagus, he had a hard time eating. With amazing fortitude, love and equanimity, Mary kept him going. I talked to him on the phone a few weeks before his death, and he was the same Phil — weaker, softer of voice, but still funny, still sharp, interested in life. In a vintage piece of Guthrie humor, a veteran flack to the end, he even wrote his own obituary — professional, straightforward, written in the third person — and addressed the envelopes for Mary to mail upon his death.

He didn't want a funeral, so his family and friends held a private memorial in the Bodega Bay Grange Hall near his house a few weeks after he died. A retired prison administrator played a mournful "Amazing Grace" on the bagpipes, a jazz combo played (Guthrie was a serious jazz fan), and, as one old friend put it, "Everybody told Phil Guthrie stories — some of which are printable in a family newspaper."

—Sigrid Bathen

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always been part of the package.

"My experience as a reporter going back to the late 1970s is that PIOs clearly had the political interests of their employer in mind," says Sandy Harrison, a longtime Capitol reporter who for nearly two years has been press secretary — a political appointment exempt from civil service — to Senate President pro Tempore Bill Lockyer (D-Hayward). "I don't think that has changed. That's not to say that every PIO I ever dealt with was a partisan hack. They were helpful and nonpartisan. But their primary role was to [serve] their boss — if not the department head, then the agency secretary or ultimately the governor."

Many PIOs bristle at the suggestion that their job is simply to make their bosses look good. "I'm not going to say there is not a political element," says former Sacramento television newsman Tip Kindel, who for eight years has been the chief information officer/communications director for the state Corrections Department, a job which puts him daily in the eye of an increasingly thorny, highly controversial and media-intensive arena. "But we try as much as possible to stay out of [the politics]. Those issues are best addressed by the governor's office. We're really here to tell people what the department is doing, and to respond to media inquiries."

Kindel, who started in state service as a PIO I and now holds a CEA appointment in corrections, distinguishes between the political and the partisan. "Take the issue of prison overcrowding," he says. "You know you're going to run out of beds, that something has to be done ... The policy makers have two choices: They can either send fewer people to prison, or build more places to put them. Otherwise, the courts will come in and there will be wholesale releases. It's politics, but we don't take a position."

Bob Forsyth, a former *Sacramento Bee* Capitol reporter and metro editor who was press secretary to then-Senate President pro Tempore David Roberti (D-Los Angeles) and now handles media for two statewide lawyers' groups, says the partisan aspects of government P.R. are becoming more intense — and reporters are as much to blame as the politicians they cover. "Many journalists want a 'spin' directed their way," says Forsyth. "I'm kind of taken aback by journalists who seek a spin, or a sound bite to dress up their story or give them a snappy lead. I cling to the belief that if you're on the state payroll, whether it's an elected official or an agency, you have a responsibility to the public to do what you can to get the truth out, and at the same time be loyal to your employer. I know that is sometimes a balancing act. I just have a feeling that there is a little too much slickness today, a little too much obfuscation."

"Every politician worth his or her salt wants as much control over the information as possible," Forsyth adds. "So all of them have been chipping away at the information officer class. The credibility of the information officer or flack is on the line. Credibility is the only stock in trade for the information officer, and it's a damn foolish administration — politician or not — who screws around with that."

Unlike other critics, who sometimes blame Governor Wilson's handlers for his generally negative media image, Forsyth says the governor has created his own image. "Wilson is his own worst enemy in terms of the media, as Reagan was his best friend," says Forsyth. "People don't ascend to those offices without

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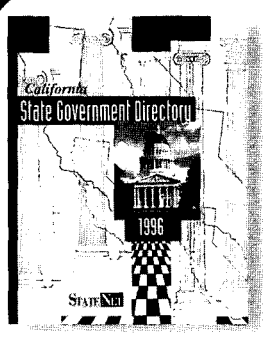

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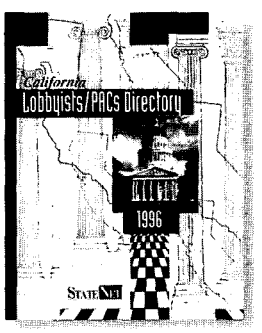

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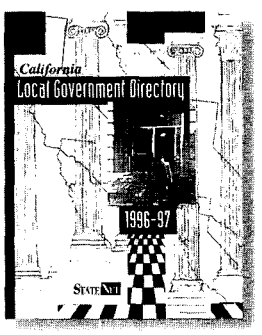

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being savvy with the media, and they can screw that up all by themselves. Basically, Wilson has the image of a mean-spirited s.o.b. And he has created that image on his own without anybody's help."

Sean Walsh, Wilson's press secretary for the past three years, worked for six years in the Bush presidency, and comes principally from a political rather than a journalistic background. He took a brief leave to be Wilson's campaign press secretary during the governor's ill-fated run for president, and in recent years has been the governor's spokesman during a time of intense controversy over several hot-button political issues, including affirmative action, immigration and welfare. Sharp-tongued and intensely partisan, Walsh makes it clear that he speaks *for* the governor, and his style can come across as pugnacious and harsh. He is generally sanguine about the vitriol directed at his boss — though he admits he is sometimes stunned by the intensity of it. "They don't call us flacks for nothing," he says, insisting that the governor is only doing his job as chief executive.

"There is this huge bureaucracy which, fair or unfair, the governor is responsible for managing," says Walsh. "Pete Wilson is a very hands-on manager of policies. Do I like every policy? Am I paid to argue Sean Walsh's views and issues? No. The same goes for public information officers at agencies and departments."

Walsh flatly denies that the governor's office intrudes on the day-to-day, information handling of state departments. "I honestly don't like to meddle in the PIOs' business. But I do want to know about things before they happen." He says the line between public information and executive policy is sometimes a thin one. And he likens the governor's media image to the popularity — or unpopularity — of the policy decision of the moment. "Are you familiar with *Star Trek?*" he asks. "Where they beam up Kirk, and it's the good Kirk or the bad Kirk?"

Walsh insists Wilson "recognizes the importance of having an informed media and professionals who have the ability to put that message out," but he sees nothing wrong with the governor offering to publicize department activities. "The chief executive's time is very limited, and he can highlight policy issues to the benefit of a department or agency. . .Government may move like a thousand-jointed centipede, but state government follows the head — that's where the money is, where the core social issues are argued or discussed."

Although Walsh denies it, some journalists who have been around the Wilson administration for many years, say the governor doesn't much like reporters — and that dislike translates into excessive micro-management of the information coming out of his administration. "It is a much more politicized climate than it was under the previous governor (Republican George Deukmejian)," says one former reporter, now a media liaison for a prominent politician, who asked not to be named. "I've never liked the way they've run their press shop. Deukmejian was far more accessible, and getting information out of his administration was far easier. I am hearing constantly from reporters that phone calls are not returned, not referred out in a timely manner.

"Frankly, I think the governor has a strong dislike for the media."

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The Politics

One East Bay official called the situation regarding the Oakland Coliseum as "governing over hell." Yet officials from other cities are anxious to share her experiences. Stadiums, and the pro sports teams they attract, still are municipal cocaine.

by Noel Brinkerhoff

Anyone who has ever watched ABC's "Wide World of Sports" may remember the familiar opening narration that described the crux of athletic competition as being "the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat." Such emotional extremes tend to transfer from the playing field to the political arena when local government officials endeavor to build or upgrade sports stadiums. Throughout the state, officials are grappling with the financial and political details of ensuring the presence of professional sports in their communities. The presence of professional sports is supposed to be a magnet for economic wealth, many officials claim, as dollars pour in where touchdowns and no-hitters delight large crowds. And when experts question the economic benefits of such plans — which is beginning to happen more frequently — other intangible justifications are offered, including the "prestige" factor that's supposed to come with having a sports franchise, or the opportunity to bring local communities together on such projects.

But these endeavors hold plenty of pitfalls for local politicians, and as in the case of Oakland, the troubles can grow into a political sinkhole threatening to devour the careers of those involved.

Though far from over, the ordeal has already become quite a saga in upgrading the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum. The plan originated as part of the deal that brought the National Football League Raiders back to Oakland after a 14 year stay in Los Angeles. City and county officials were ecstatic over the agreement and believed the community's longtime love affair with the football team would provide the financial strength to pay

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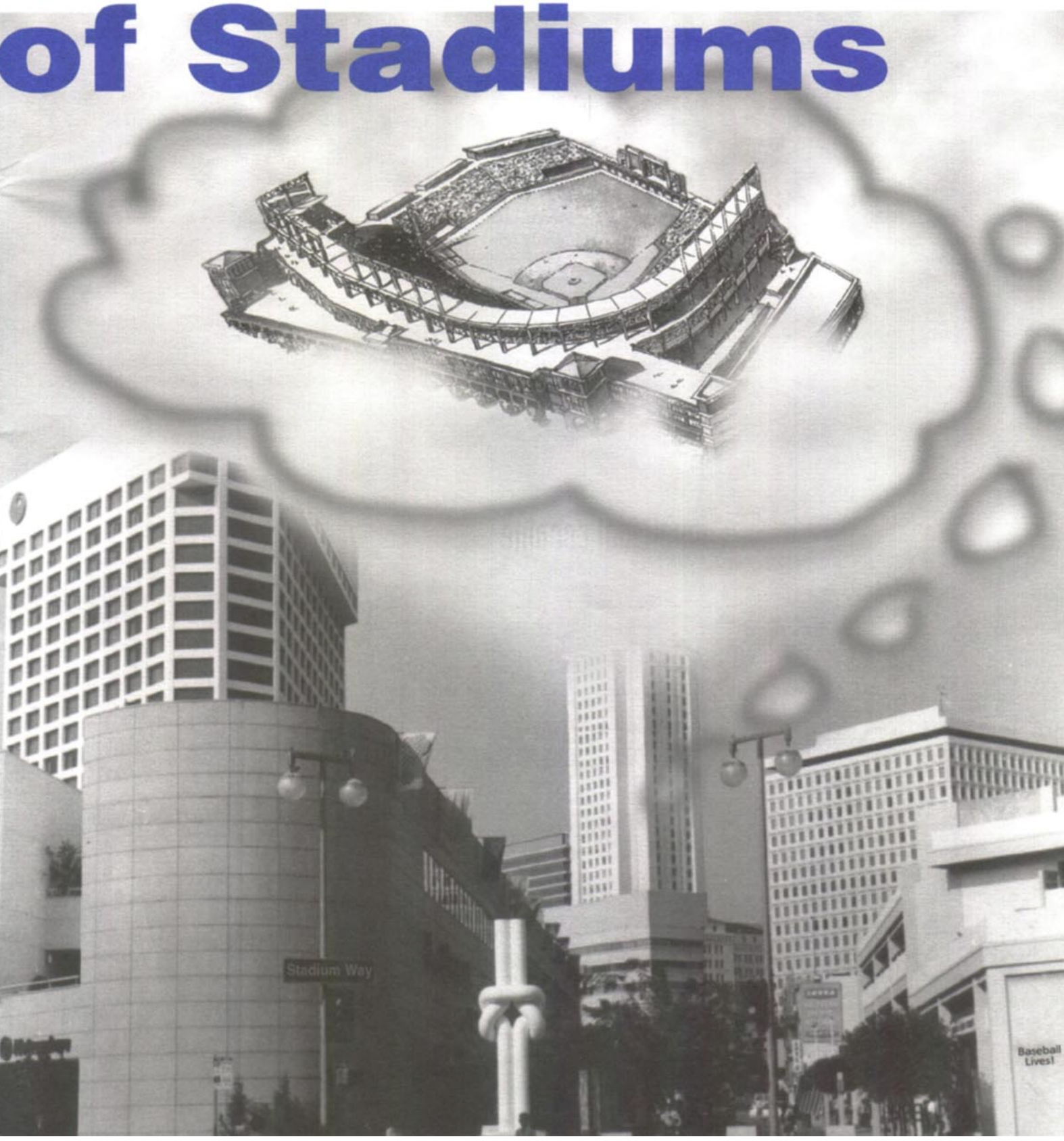
# of Stadiums



Stadium art courtesy of HOK Sport

for the Coliseum's renovations.

"It was not crafted well," Gail Steele, president of the Oakland Board of Supervisors, admitted about the financing plan. Officials agreed to bear the responsibility of stadium construction by taking out $200 million in bonds. But the cost of repaying the debt fell upon season ticket holders who were required to purchase personal seat licenses (PSLs) and pay annual maintenance fees just to buy game tickets.

Despite hiring some highly respected marketing experts to run the sales operation, Oakland has managed to sell only

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35,000 PSLs — 10,000 short of what they need to pay off the bonds.

Where did things go wrong? For starters, season ticket holders were asked to fork over anywhere from $250 to $4000 for a PSL plus another $50 to $75 in annual fees. These costs proved too high for some would-be season ticket buyers, especially since the PSLs — which normally are good for a lifetime in other locales — will expire after 10 years. Other problems included people getting different seats than they were promised or seats with lousy views of the field.

"When you sell (PSLs) for $4000, you better be Nordstroms," Assemblyman Don Perata (D-Oakland) said about the troubled marketing operation. "Problem was, we were the post office instead." Perata, just elected to the Legislature, was an Alameda County supervisor during negotiations to return the Raiders.

To make matters worse, Raiders officials began pressuring locals to adjust the PSL and fee requirements in order to boost lagging ticket sales — all of which go directly to the team and not to the city or county. But the waiver of the maintenance fees and PSLs for additional ticket purchases did little to improve things. Meanwhile, the construction budget ballooned from $100 million to $130 million after some changes, like new scoreboards and concession stands, weren't included in the original calculations. Other costs were added because of demands from the Coliseum's other occupant, baseball's Athletics.

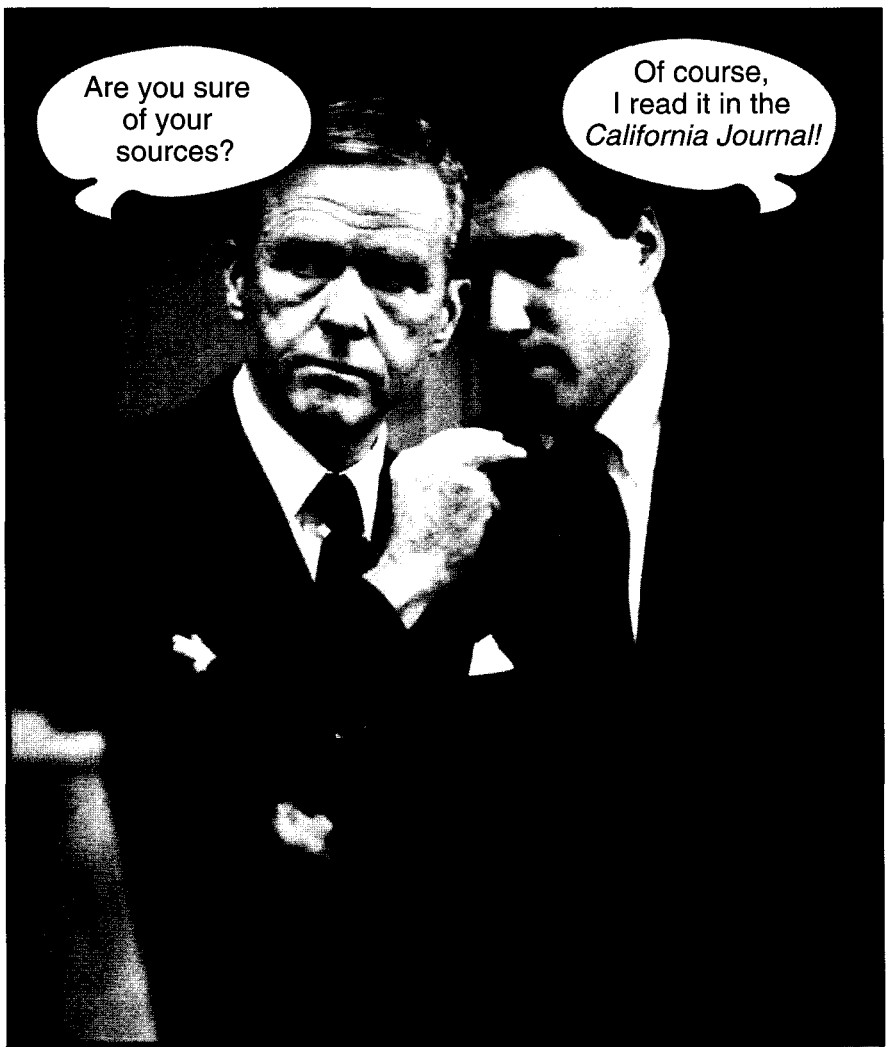
For the time being, enough PSL revenues exist to meet obligations, according to Steele. The problems, however, will hit next July if remedies aren't found to improve PSL sales because debt payments will then come out of general fund coffers. Like most local communities, Oakland has plenty of other priorities to spend money on, so officials cringe at the thought of allocating funds for stadium renovations.

Local officials also have to contend with an embarrassing grand jury investigation examining the Coliseum fiasco. Though its purpose is merely to gather information and not indict anyone, the grand jury's report could prove damaging to local officials when election time rolls around.

"It's a real possibility that there will be some political fallout because we're responsible for the current climate," Steele said. Although Perata doesn't believe there will be any voter backlash, his involvement in salvaging the marketing operation ended rather quickly once he began running for the Assembly. "There were too many snafus, and I didn't need the grief," Perata said.

Oakland voters have demonstrated their willingness in the past to hold such mistakes against elected officials. In 1990 then-Mayor Lionel Wilson lost his bid for re-election to then-Assemblyman Elihu Harris partly because of the incumbent's support for a plan that had the city giving what was essentially a $54 million gift to the Raiders to lure the team back.

While financing schemes for stadium projects almost always involve some kind of public dollars, officials sometimes find crafty ways to minimize public involvement. In San Diego, Jack Murphy Stadium will be undergoing a $78 million "facelift" in preparation for the 1998 Super Bowl, and to keep the Chargers in town for another 25 years. City officials utilized a little slight-of-hand maneuvering with lease-revenue



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bonds to pay for the work — a plan almost jeopardized by a legal challenge from anti-tax activists. Although the state Constitution requires two-thirds voter approval before local governments invest in long-term debt, city officials got around this barrier by turning control of the stadium over to a financing authority, which took out the bonds. This authority — which happens to consist of the city manager, city attorney and city auditor of San Diego -- receives lease payments from the city to pay off the debt.

"This agency is just a shell of the city," Craig Johnson, professor of public finance at Indiana University, told the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. "The intent is to circumvent the public, which I think is wrong." So did some local citizens, who tried to get the state Supreme Court to throw the financing plan out.

The court ruled against the challenge because of the established precedent of local governments using lease-revenue financing for all kinds of endeavors, not just stadiums. In the last 10 years, local governments have invested $55 billion in lease-revenue bonds for various projects because of voters' growing distaste for public spending, especially taxes.

While upgrading existing facilities with luxury boxes and more seating is expensive enough, building a stadium is even more difficult because of the higher overall costs involved. Raising taxes may have been feasible for new ballparks in Arlington, Cleveland or Denver, but the same assumption cannot be easily applied to cities in California, where anti-tax fever remains high.

Sacramento Mayor Joe Serna has a public-financing quandary on his hands in his attempt to build a downtown stadium. Because the effort is being touted as a regional plan involving surrounding counties, a tax increase is being promoted by one local official to help finance the costs. Sacramento County Supervisor Roger Dickinson's plan would have voters in four counties — Sacramento, Yolo, Placer, and El Dorado — decide on a .2 percent sales-tax increase, which could generate $40 million for a new stadium.

Serna, however, wants nothing to do with Dickinson's plan. "I'm staying away from that," said Serna, who considers such an idea "premature" at best and with good reason. A *Sacramento Bee* poll found 70 percent of those in the area opposed to a stadium plan if it means more taxes. Such findings are reinforced by the fact that voters in three of the four counties overwhelmingly approved the anti-tax measure, Proposition 218, last November. Yet, Serna has to contend with this tax idea floating about as he travels from county to county attempting to convince other local officials to join his Sacramento Ballpark Authority. Serna needs regional support to get a stadium, and while the SBA will ultimately decide where and how it will be built, the mayor says it's either downtown Sacramento or nothing.

"I'm off this thing if it's not downtown," insisted Serna, who hopes to copy the success stories in Baltimore or Denver where new ballparks helped urban revitalization efforts. "If we build a ballpark and get a team, there will be immediate economic benefits to downtown."

Such economic assertions are questioned, however, by researchers who insist stadiums aren't the financial bonanza officials claim. A report by the Congressional Research Service reported public money used in the building of the Baltimore Ravens' football stadium would have been better invested in the state's economic development fund.

Roger Noll, an economics professor at Stanford University, says most of the money spent at stadiums comes from people living within 15 miles of it, which is revenue that could be spent at other local businesses. Despite this transfer of local dollars from one enterprise to another, Noll admits the importance of having a sports team comes in other, less quantifiable terms.

"Economic impact is trivial compared to the psychological importance," Noll said.

Indeed, the psyche of officials and the community figure prominently in the difficulties and rewards of stadium politics. "When you see the enjoyment at the ballpark, you forget about getting beat up here at the office every day over this," Steele said, who summed up her experience in the Coliseum debacle as "governing over hell."

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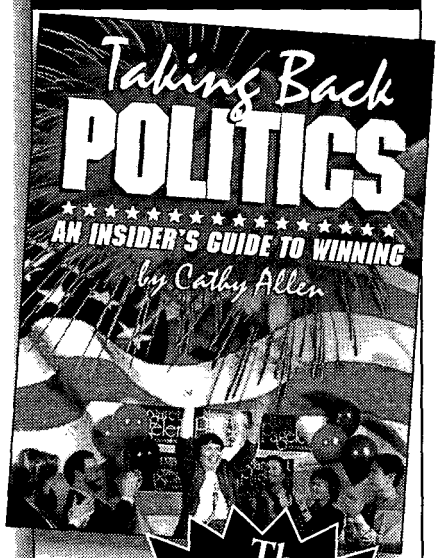

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Washington Notes

perspective

by Marc Sandalow

Leon Panetta

Leon Panetta tells anyone who asks that he has not yet decided whether to run for governor. After 16 years in Congress and four in the White House, he says he needs time at his Carmel Valley walnut grove to reflect. It shouldn't take long.

Unless someone can talk him out of it, Panetta sounds very much like he will be the next Democratic heavyweight to jump into the race to succeed Governor Pete Wilson. He has the background, the credentials, and the support in high places. He even has a stump speech.

"I [was] born and raised in California. And I love the state," the outgoing White House chief of staff said in a recent conversation. "It's the home of my family, it's the home of my children in the future and their children. I am concerned about California not being number one in this country. When I was raised, California was on the cutting edge of a lot of areas," such as education, agriculture, technology, its economy and natural environment. "I think that over the last 10 or more years it has slipped. And people begin to wonder what's going on with the state. ...I worry about whether California can again restore itself as number one."

The ruminations from his expansive White House office — adorned with Ansel Adams photographs of the central coast and an NFL football from the '49ers last Super Bowl appearance — sound very much like the outlines of a declaration speech.

Panetta's entry would certainly shake the foundations of the Democratic gubernatorial field, which currently consists of Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis and state Controller Kathleen Connell and may grow to include U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein and Northwest Airlines co-chairman Alfred Checchi. For the record, however, Panetta is very cautious.

"What the next step is for me, whether it's to enjoy private life, or whether it is to continue in public service, is something that I want to take the time to think about," Panetta said. "It is a momentous undertaking that would require an enormous commitment from family as well as political and financial backers."

At times, Panetta sounds downright conflicted, saying he has not taken a vacation in 30 months as chief of staff, and that he must "decompress" from the rigors of Washington before he can think clearly about his future. But steer the conversation to California politics, and Panetta sounds like he could walk out of his West Wing office and onto the gubernatorial stump.

Governor Wilson, he says, has turned his back on his moderate-progressive roots and evolved into a fire-breathing extremist, not unlike the conservative leaders on Capitol Hill. And California has suffered for it. The recent initiatives against illegal immigrants and affirmative action reek of what Panetta calls the "politics of division" and threaten California's reputation and its livelihood.

"I was raised in the Hiram Johnson, Earl Warren, Thomas Kuchel tradition," Panetta said, citing the fiercely independent progressives who helped shape California's Republican Party throughout the 1900s. "These were Republicans who ... really believed in issues like equal justice, equal rights, rights of workers ... education."

"I think that California, just like the rest of the country, has to get beyond the politics of division and start recognizing that what we have to do is start working on solving problems together," he said.

If Panetta were as ubiquitous in California as he is in Washington, he might enter the race as a frontrunner. But he faces the reverse situation of almost every other political figure in town — he is probably better known inside-the-beltway than in his home state.

"I could walk Leon from the Oregon Border to Mexico, and no heads would turn," said veteran California Democratic consultant Joe Cerrell. "Not that he couldn't change that — but he starts out with a disadvantage."

That is hard for many in Washington to understand, where Panetta's mug is as familiar as any local icon from White House consultant George Stephanopoulos to celebrity journalist Cokie Roberts to basketball star Chris Webber. Panetta could not venture from Dupont Circle to the closest Starbucks without being besieged by lobbyists, reporters or government groupies. But Panetta has never run a campaign outside his former Monterey-area congressional district, and consultants figure it will take at least $20 million, and perhaps much more, to wage a credible statewide campaign.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to Panetta's chances is Feinstein, who is unabashed about her interest in becoming governor but won't announce whether she is willing to subject herself to yet another campaign until early 1998. That could freeze out money and professional assistance for Panetta, who would need to attract support from Feinstein's base.

"Those people are small in number and would probably give [money] to both [campaigns]," said Feinstein, displaying little concern for Panetta's predicament. "I don't ask the world to stop. If you can't keep your powder dry — okay."

Unlike Feinstein, who has run three statewide campaigns in the past six years, Panetta needs to get started in order to build a political operation. He says he will make a final decision no later than early summer.

Panetta could also face problems if California's love affair with Clinton turns sour. Although he will leave the administration shortly, he will forever be tied to the president, and if the economy were to sour or Clinton were to make an unpopular move, Panetta could pay a price.

The difficulties have already lead some political junkies to speculate that Panetta and Feinstein will strike a deal, in which he will either forgo a run for Senate, or do nothing to harm her, in return for appointment to her Senate seat if she wins the governor's job. It is too early to take such rumors seriously. But it is clear that barring a sudden interest in walnut farming, Panetta returns home a force in California politics.

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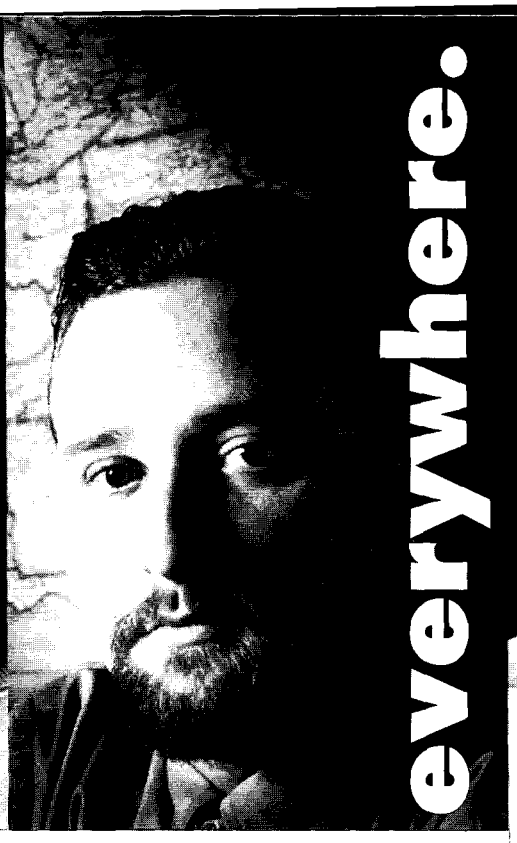

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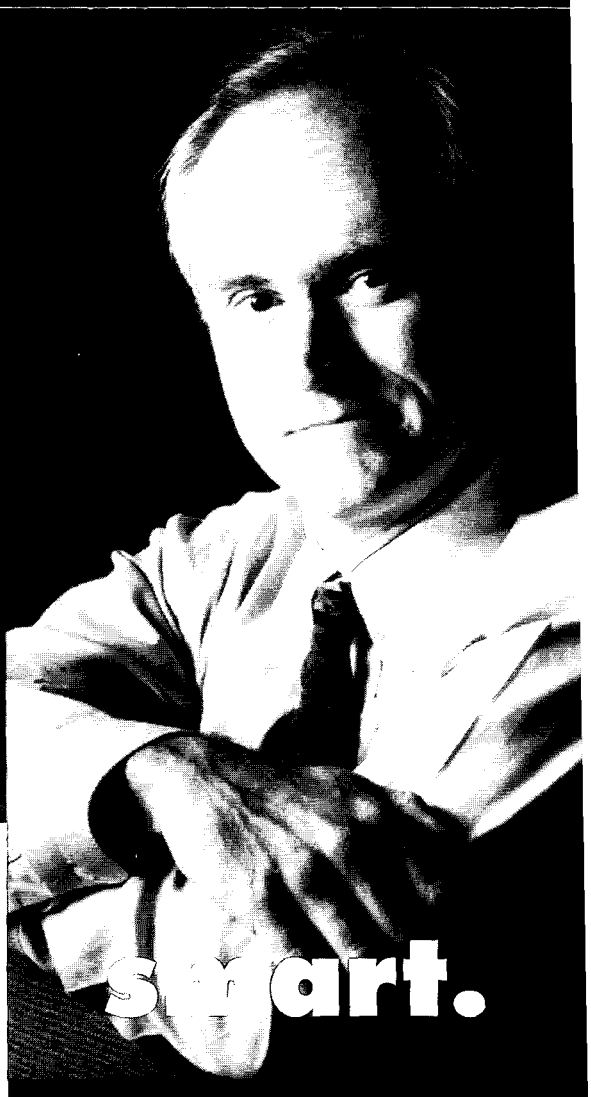

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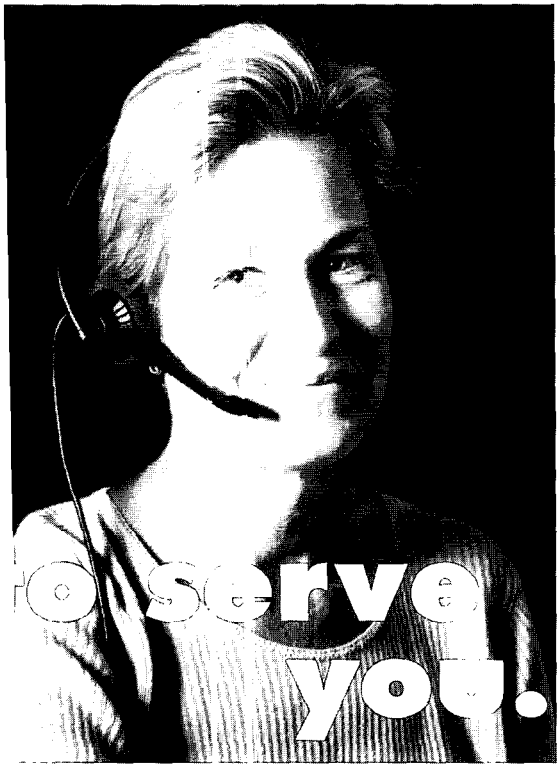

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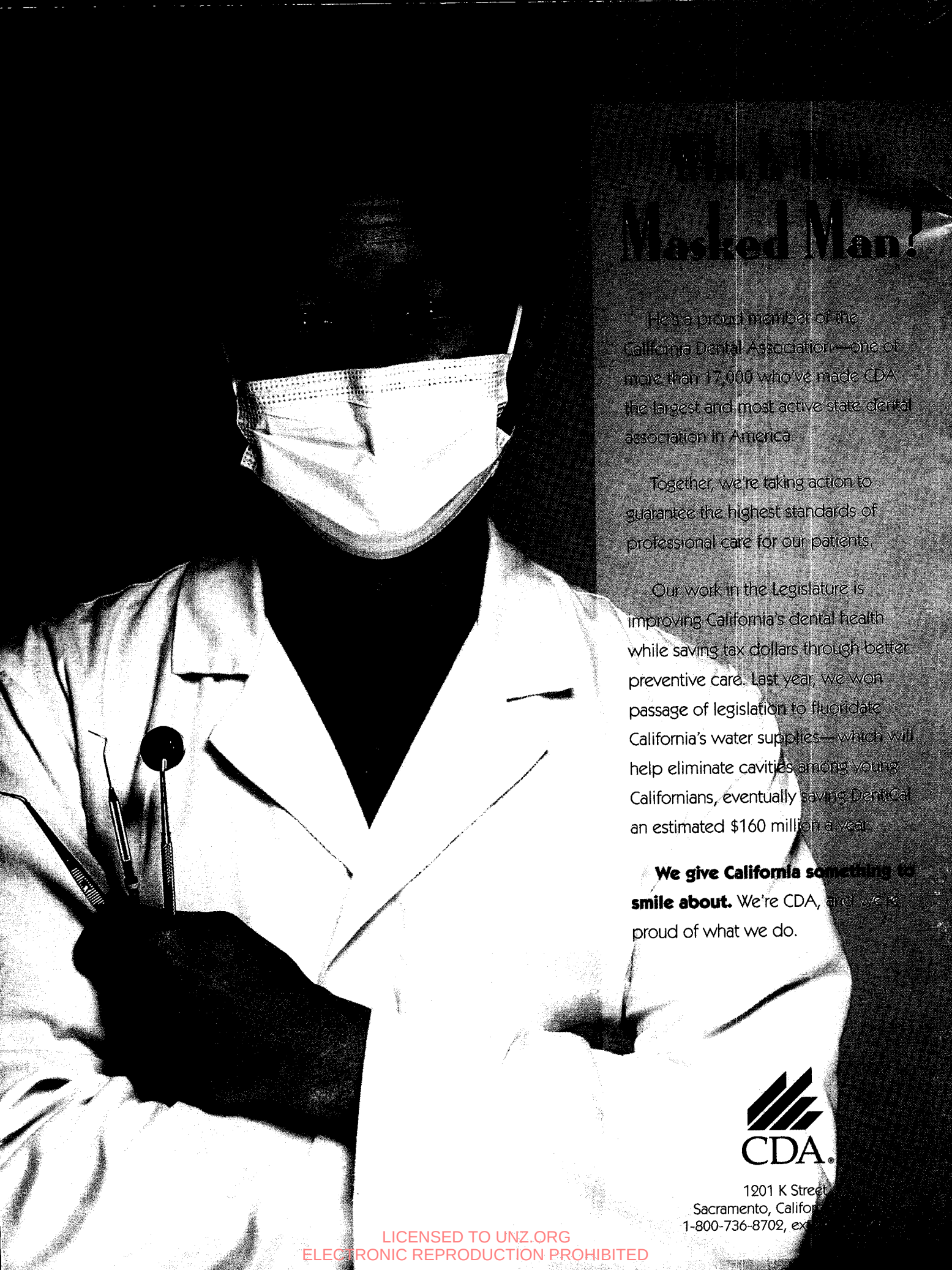

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